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# STATESMAN AND NATION

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# THE RIGHTS OF COMMON MEN

THE leading members of the Council of Europe have rightly emphasised the unrepresentative character of its Consultative Assembly. The delegates have been arbitrarily selected. No Communists, for instance, are present, though in some countries represented they are among the largest parties in the State. Those who believe that the Council is an embryonic Western European Federation may prove right in the event. There is, however, no sign at present that any of the countries at Strasbourg are prepared to pool their sovereignty. Nor do these European Powers share a "common heritage," as the phrase goes, in any sense that would not justify the presence of America and the Dominions. Indeed, the inclusion of Turkey, which has no democratic experience, is a striking anomaly if the common heritage is the Greco-Roman-Christian culture of the Mediterranean. Everyone knows that Turkey is present at the Conference because she has a common frontier with the Soviet Union and is a recipient of Truman Aid.

The nature of the Council is well illustrated by the discussion on Human Rights. The rights of man, historically speaking, were demands which were put forward at different periods by social groups and which have been ultimately recognised by the law. From the 16th century to the period of the French Revolution, these rights were won by middle-class agitators, including Cromwell, Robespierre and Thomas Jefferson. They fought against the absolute authority of the Monarchy, the authoritarian claims of the Church and the archaic impositions of a feudal economy. The rights they won arose from this struggle between representatives of the old feudal era and the new class of merchant shop keepers and small landowners. They included the right to worship as men pleased—a Protestant right extorted from the Roman Church, which can never be honestly accepted by a Church which claims to be universal and infallible; private property, that is, in its original form, a man's absolute right to make what he can and use his wealth as he likes; the right to a fair trial and freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. Since the Industrial Revolution, the workers have also won the right of association, the right to strike—that is to refuse in unison unsatisfactory conditions of employment. The right to work or maintenance is now, in one way or another, legally accepted in many countries—indeed, it is implied in the Atlantic Charter's emphasis on "freedom from want."

Significantly, there were many empty seats during the discussion on Human Rights, and those who urged the Council to set up machinery to guarantee them selected only three rights: religious freedom, habeas corpus and free speech. Two comments at once arise. It is true that these fundamental rights are a matter of supreme importance and that Western Europe fears above all the Police State and "the knock on the door at two in the morning." But that does not justify the omission of those rights with which the workers are particularly concerned. Nor does it render less ridiculous the spectacle of the present Turkish and Greek Governments insisting on a guarantee of human rights. Finally, we must ask how far any members of the Council are prepared to accept an international court to enforce these human rights. If such a court were set up would Britain or France or Holland, let alone Greece or Turkey, submit to its jurisdiction if their colonial subjects were to appeal to it?

Are we then to write off the Western European Movement as a fraud, as nothing but a pretentious means of creating the right political climate in which to organise a military bloc against the Soviet Union? That, clearly, is its most likely line of development. But, the possibilities do not end there. The Council contains many sincere members who are not prepared to see Western Europe a satellite of American big business. New organisations, they know, sometimes develop in ways unforeseen by their founders. Some day the Council of Europe may be compelled to become representative of the common people of Western Europe, just as the very unrepresentative chamber that once tried to guarantee the feudal privileges of free men became in the end the British House of Commons. The Council may come to nothing or prove merely to be a tool of reaction. If the Socialist Movement, now in a minority, does its work properly, it may in time see to it that the Council represents the claims of working men and women and becomes some guarantee of rights which, at the moment, have escaped the Council's attention.

### Soviet Threat to Tito

It seems possible that tensions in the Balkan peninsula are near to breaking point. Last week-end the Russians told Belgrade that they regarded the Tito regime as an "enemy," and that, if the Yugoslavs continued to maltreat Soviet citizens, the Soviet Union would have to resort to "more effective means to protect" its citizens and "to bring to order the unrestrained Fascist offenders." The Soviet Note does not deny that these Russians had helped to hand out Cominform propaganda in Yugoslavia, but argues that this was merely "the free expression of democratic views"—although it is somewhat hard to believe that they would hold to this opinion if Yugoslavs in the Soviet Union began distributing tracts against Stalin. The harsh terms of this Note, together with Anna Pauker's forecast that "the Tito bandits will not do business much longer unpunished," suggest that some new pressure upon Yugoslavia is imminent. Three possible lines of development suggest themselves. The Russians may be considering a

direct military attack upon Yugoslavia; but this seems to be unlikely for many cogent reasons—unless the Russians consider an aggression from the West so near that they must take preventive measures in Yugoslavia much as they took them in Finland ten years ago. Or the Russians may have reason to believe that secret opposition to Tito inside Yugoslavia is or will soon be strong enough to attempt a *coup d'état*, especially if supported by guerilla incursions from across her Cominform frontiers. Thirdly, the Russians may be anxious to define their hostility to the Tito regime in case the latter becomes involved in the Greek-Albanian *fracas* which increasingly threatens. Many supporters of the Greek Government have long believed that the only way to end the civil war is to invade Albania—with which the Greeks, by the way, have never made peace—and thus to swamp the civil war in a wider conflict. When the Greek army failed to take the Vitsi stronghold last summer they asserted that the Greek rebels had escaped by passing through Albanian territory; this summer they make the same accusation. But to-day the situation is changed in one important respect. Yugoslavia and Albania are now on the worst of terms. If the Greeks invaded the south of Albania, would the Yugoslavs refrain from invading the north? And if Albania then called to its Cominform allies for support, what would or could those allies do? The consequences of the Soviet break with Tito are incalculable.

### Loyalty and the Constitution

During the last two years, there has been a crop of American legislation directed against Communism and any activities which the authorities care to classify as such. To-day, twenty-five States have such laws; the Taft-Hartley Act embodies a loyalty clause; and the new Mundt Bill, successor to the one which died in the last Congress, would confer sweeping powers upon the Administration to harry any group which did not keep closely to the line of "patriotism" defined by the American Legion and the National Association of Manufacturers. Last winter, the legislature of Maryland passed the Ober Bill, imposing savage penalties for membership of any organisation defined as "subversive" by the State authorities. This attempt to drive Communism from Maryland would have come into force in June, had its application not been obstructed by law suits brought to test its constitutionality. A Federal judge has now held that the Ober Law violates both the Maryland Constitution and the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the Federal Constitution, that "it is an unlawful bill of attainder and is too general for a penal statute." Government, the judge insisted, "may punish for acting, but not for thinking." This is a firm and welcome re-assertion of the rights traditionally guaranteed by the Constitution, and it should do much to encourage the growing opposition to a witch hunt which, in Ohio for instance, has reached the point of making unemployment benefits conditional upon a loyalty oath.

### The Prodigal Nephew

The real objectives of the Washington talks are being obscured by the foolish and acrimonious campaigns of Labour's American critics. Building rumours and half-truths into fantasy, they see their chance to rescue Britain for free enterprise and to relieve the American taxpayer from the unjust burden of supporting the prodigal and Socialist nephew. True, the tirades of obscure Senators achieve international publicity for arguments which reflect their distaste for the Fair Deal as much as their hatred of British Labour policy. But they no more state the Administration's attitude to the talks than the "circumstantial" theory of the *Wall Street Journal* that economic union between the U.S. and Britain will have an important place on the agenda. Certainly, Mr. Snyder and his Treasury colleagues will be unwilling to extend further any emergency aid to Britain unless they believe that greater efforts to promote "efficiency" in this country, by increasing incentives and cutting costs, will be made in return. But both sides are more concerned to find immediate and short-term methods of checking the drain upon Britain's reserves during the next few months, than to work out any fundamental remedy for the disequilibrium between the sterling and dollar areas. The British delegates want cash, now, more urgently than decisions of principle—which, in any case, could probably not be made until an election had either given or refused Labour a fresh mandate—to bridge the gap between minimum dollar spending and the inadequate allocation proposed by O.E.E.C. The most Britain can expect is to secure firm American commitments to purchase a minimum of primary products from the sterling area, permission to use Marshall dollars for Canadian wheat, and tariff concessions. No doubt, further help to the tune of $300 million a year could be arranged one way or another. But dramatic agreements are unlikely in Washington; neither side is able at this moment to do more than discuss the basic disequilibrium in generalities.

### Trade Union View

The annual report of the T.U.C. General Council, which will be discussed at the coming Bridlington Congress, rightly pays a tribute to the Unions' contribution to economic recovery. But through the careful phrases of the report, especially in the sections on nationalisation and production, there rings an echo of the Unions' dissatisfaction and anxieties. Replying to the T.U.C. questionnaire, both the miners and the railwaymen reported rank-and-file discontent with the way nationalised industries are being run; "goodwill," the N.U.M. states, "is being replaced by cynicism." Failure to consult the workers on important matters, adds the N.U.R., is making the men "extremely dissatisfied." Other Unions emphasise the same point. In short, the workers increasingly feel that consultation, though nominally accepted by the Boards, is not much more effective than it was in the days of private ownership. The recruiting and promotion of managerial staff from outside the industries adds fuel to these grievances. There is some substance to the Unions' complaints; in one case after another, though the Boards may have the best intentions, and though the difficulty of giving the workers a voice in the control of the industries is genuine, the workers feel that things have changed much too little. The T.U.C. remedies are not impressive. It is useful to suggest more "consultative machinery," the nomination of more Union officials to the Boards, increased training of union members for responsible positions and a promotion policy to advance them when trained. But this skates round the centre of the problem. Consultation has failed to work because nobody has taken the matter seriously enough to devise means of consultation at all levels, continuously; "crisis talks" between the "brass" on both sides are the inevitable and highly unsatisfactory result. It is to this that the T.U.C. should turn its attention. For it is, ultimately, the only way of overcoming the workers' fear of redundancy, if they support "measures to increase productivity," which is obviously so widespread that the T.U.C. report surprisingly couples it with its eulogy of the Unions' production drive.

### Crisis in Malta

Economically, Malta is dependent upon Britain: though the island has home rule, its 300,000 people must use British funds to pay for their essential imports. In the past, the "invisible" exports represented by the British upkeep of the naval dockyard and other defence installations have helped the islanders to pay their way, but the dismissal of some 1,200 workers for economy reasons has come after the withdrawal, last March, of the British food subsidies and helped precipitate the present crisis. Prices have been rising steadily, the pressure of surplus population—Malta has perhaps sixty thousand too many people—has not been relieved by any substantial emigration, and the islanders foresee a future of growing unemployment and falling living standards. The Maltese delegates to the London talks, finding the Colonial Office unresponsive to their urgent requests for greater financial assistance, have now fallen out among themselves. After the Maltese Government had issued an "ultimatum" to London, insisting that "grave steps" would follow unless an immediate settlement was reached, the Colonial Office threatened to suspend the talks if the "ultimatum" was not withdrawn. Premier Boffa then withdrew it: but the Vice-Premier, Mr. Mintoff, and the Maltese Commissioner-General, Mr. Ellul, then resigned in protest. Mr. Mintoff, who was the most radical member of Malta's Labour Government, has now returned home to raise a popular agitation for aid—including Maltese priority for Marshall dollars, over Germany and Italy. Mr. Mintoff has for long been seeking to improve Malta's social services, especially by creating a health service, and has refused to accept his colleagues' view that these would throw an impossible burden on the island's resources. Let Britain renew the food subsidies, he has urged, for the island's economy is a British responsibility. Already, Malta has been drawing on the special War Damage Fund to the tune of £3.5 millions a year, which represents a fifth of the island's income, and that Fund will run out in a few years. On the crudest argument, even a naval base deserves a pension.

### French Reactions

Our Paris correspondent writes: The delight caused in Washington by the result of the West German elections is, in the eyes of many French observers, even more significant than the elections themselves. "The *Pax Americana* is in full swing," one French commentator remarked. He meant by this that, so long as "democratic" appearances were observed it did not matter how far to the Right the governments of Western Europe were to be; in fact, the farther to the Right the better. The defeat of the Social Democrats in Western Germany was dictated, in the words of Mr. Acheson, by "moderation and common sense." One would hardly describe the German Socialists as a bunch of red-hot Bolshies; but, even so, the Americans would rather not see them, with their ideas on nationalisation and socialisation, play any part, let alone a decisive part, in the running of Western Germany. When it was suggested in the French press that the Socialists would be excluded from the new German government, M. Blum, following his now all-too-familiar Coué method, said "*Laissez-moi sourire*," and then went on to demonstrate that the German Socialists were too important to be left out in the cold, that their defeat was, in fact, a victory, and that the West German elections

were a happy prelude to the establishment of true democracy in Germany.

Blum also tried to brush aside the "over-simple" suggestion that the German elections denoted the victory of American-sponsored "free enterprise" over British-sponsored Socialism, though on this score ironical French comments are not lacking. "The Labour Party," says Ronsac in *Franc-Tireur*, "is, of course, frightfully devoted to socialisation in Germany, now that it no longer has the means of carrying it out; while they were in sole control of the Ruhr, the British refrained from doing anything." Other commentators allege that Mr. Bevin gave way to the Americans on that occasion, as usual. And now, they say, Western Germany is going to become—with "Reds" like Schumacher well out of the way, or at any rate impotent—the favourite field in Europe for American investment.

But the triumph of "American" ideas in Western Germany is also considered to be ominous in relation to the rest of Western Europe. Is not the State Department hoping that all the countries of Western Europe will, more or less, follow suit? Everywhere American policy is being backed by much the same kind of forces—and first among them is the Catholic Church, which is showing increasing signs of being not only anti-Communist, but also anti-Socialist—even in countries like Germany and Belgium where Socialism is as mild as can be—and indeed quite as anti-Communist as the village curé. No wonder the M.R.P. in France sounded more pleased with the German elections than any French parties to the Left of it—though even the M.R.P., it must be said, has enough French common sense (judging from M. Bidault's attitude at Strasbourg) not to be quite as enthusiastic as Mr. Churchill at the prospect of bringing Germany into the Council of Europe and even into the Atlantic Pact. But the State Department would certainly like the rest of Europe to follow Germany's admirable example. When Parliament reassembles in France at the end of October there is almost certain to be a government crisis, with the Socialists being squeezed out of the Government by M. Paul Reynaud and other members of that "classical Right" which, as so many speakers at the recent Socialist congress noted, is coming into its own again, and is, in fact, much more powerful than de Gaulle.

And then there is Belgium. The Belgian Socialists are not "Reds," and are not even mildly "*dirigiste*," but they still represent the interests of the working-class; and it is typical of the present trend in Europe that, for the first time since the war (indeed since 1935) they should be excluded from the Government; and here again the "Social Christians"—and, with them, Leopold—are fully backed by the Church. Maybe it is also significant that the Archbishop of Paris, newly appointed by the Vatican, should have been a notorious Vichyite.

In short, the Third Force—whether one uses the term in the economic sense of Socialist planning, or in the political sense of progressive democracy with a clean war record and without any of your Committees for un-American activities and the rest—is in grave danger of disappearing. The Socialist parties of the Continent looked to the British Labour Party for ideological guidance, but they received none. And now, as *Combat* bitterly remarks, the crowning achievement of American policy will be the establishment of a Conservative Government in Britain. That is what should logically happen, for, as the same paper says, "the enclave of a Socialist Britain is rapidly becoming an anomaly in Conservative Europe."

# WHAT POLICY FOR GERMANY?

THE West German elections have produced an easy triumph for all those conservative groups and parties which are trying to reproduce in defeated Germany a political and economic image of the past. They are therefore a stern warning to the world that Germany remains a potent source of evil. But they have one advantage: they enable everyone to see what trends are uppermost in Western Germany, and to take their stand accordingly. The British Tories, alarmed though they may be at the prospect of a strongly vocal German Nationalism, seem satisfied with the outcome of the elections. The Labour Party, by the same token, will know that to give support to this West German Government is to give up all hope of saving Europe from destruction. Dr. Adenauer, its Premier, recently asked for the inclusion of West Germany in the Atlantic Pact. But even Mr. Churchill has repudiated any intention of re-arming Germany.

To follow the Tories in their present aim of using a Nationalist Western Germany as a new "bulwark against Bolshevism"—as the Foreign Office, no doubt, hopes it may continue to do—would complete the ruin of Europe. But what is the alternative? Is it any longer useful to nag away at the need for structural change in Germany as the prerequisite of any true democracy, to mourn the muddle of denazification, to try to spoon the milk of our good intentions drop by drop back into the jug? As things stand today, with Allied military government at an end in the western Zones and the Americans in command, this would reduce Labour policy to a sterile opposition which would earn, and rightly, the contempt of the Conservatives and the hatred of the Germans.

There will be no dispute about the facts of life in western Germany. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the western democracies have lost the greatest chance in history of damming the flow of German development and turning that turbulent and tremendous stream into a new and peaceful course. They have lost it because they have refused to do more than tinker with the tributaries—removing some of the more abhorrent Nazis, dismantling part of the more obvious war industry, breaking up one or two of the more stridently glaring industrial monopolies, but leaving the main current to continue upon its onward path undeterred. Let us face it: we have failed to scotch the German danger.

The German elections were a natural consequence of this failure, quite conscious and in the British case at least quite inexcusable, to achieve structural change. Faithfully, they reflected the rightward swing which the Americans have long promoted. This happy victory for "free enterprise"—as Mr. Acheson welcomed it—means in plain language that the forms of German capitalism, which did so much to throw up two world wars, are to be prolonged into the future. The keys of peace and war are being handed back to the gas-chamber merchants. In one form or another, this is the "recovery" of the 1920's.

In one form or another—perhaps the kernel of the problem lies in that. For there is one crucial distinction with the 1920's. Whereas at that time the Germans managed to conserve the essentials of their economic independence while borrowing their capital for reconstruction freely from America, today they can no longer do this. This distinction is easily illustrated. In the 1920's, for instance, much of American lending took the form of public loans—with which the borrowers could build, much as they wished, swimming pools or steel works; today this lending is directly through private investment in industry or through strict control of the "counterpart funds" of Marshall Aid. The fate of the Stinnes concern is a good example of this difference. In the 1920's the elder Stinnes was able to borrow largely from the Americans, but never lost control of his affairs. In 1948, by contrast, a German court declared the whole Stinnes busines to be American property.

The danger we are facing in Germany, accordingly, is no longer Stinnes *qua* German but Stinnes *qua* American (and Stinnes, needless to say, is only one of many). The sources of German aggression, which all the Allies recognised in 1945 to be potent in Germany's economic system, are now, in other words, American as well as German—or, more accurately, they are American-controlled. And, in case this seems unfairly anti-American, it should be noted that others take their cut. Among the great units lately removed from the dismantling list, for instance, were the Mannesmann tube works, an imposing source of Hitler's war material. But the casting vote at Mannesmann's, unless we are badly astray, lies with well-known British firms.

The enemy in Germany, if all this be so, is not simply German chauvinism, but the whole baleful apparatus of international business intrigue. American, British and French interests which have fought tenaciously and successfully since 1945 to prevent social change in the western Zones, and to penetrate that area themselves, are the same as those which financed the German industrialists in the 1920's, which welcomed Munich, which made the 1939 agreement between the F.B.I. and the *Reichsgruppe Industrie*, which weigh heavily upon American foreign policy and have the tender admiration of the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay, and which—honoured prescription—today seek the backing in the West German State of a new chauvinism raised from the ashes of 1945.

The first point in a realistic policy towards Germany, no doubt, is to recognise that there can be no peace in Germany or with Germany until economic life is made "democratic." But this no longer means expropriating only Germans: more than that, it means above all, the uprooting of foreign interests—predominantly American—which have now secured positions of unrivalled influence in western Germany. Through the use made of "counterpart funds," the operation of the dollar clause in foreign trade, the restrictions of the Joint Export-Import Agency, the control of coal and steel allocations exercised by the Ruhr Authority, the dismantling of certain parts of heavy industry selected not from security but from commercial motives, and other subtle instruments, these foreign interests are becoming the real arbiters of the destiny of West German States.

In these circumstances a Labour policy for Germany will have to recognise that the Germans have a strong excuse for nationalist resentment. The best way of reducing this resentment, clearly, and of confining virulent nationalism to those—the unrepentant Nazis and the German Tories—who will use it in any case, will be to remove the principal causes of irritation. That is one wing of a forward-looking policy—to expose and weaken those foreign (and British) interests which are rapidly causing the atmosphere of the western Zones to grow intolerably aggressive; to stand four-square with all Germans who will fight against the control of their country by foreign as well as German capitalism; and to sympathise with a reasonable German patriotism.

Germany would, in any case, have been deeply anti-Soviet, partly because the Germans have always feared Russia and committed their worst atrocities in Eastern Europe, and partly because the whole of Western Germany was horrified by the plight of the millions of German refugees from Slav territory. This inevitable anti-Soviet feeling has been deliberately exacerbated as the basis for the worst kind of German Chauvinism. From what many Allied spokesmen say, and from what their own (licensed) press tells them, Germans can only conclude that Hitler was wrong in the eyes of the western Powers merely because he attacked West as well as East. If the Allies are to have an improvement in Germany they must bring this wild propaganda to an end. And the only way of doing this today is to take Germany out of the Great Power competition by ceasing to make her a bone of contention. Even if other forms of four-Power co-operation are still beyond reach, we should still seek to negotiate a neutralisation agreement. This involves a new attempt to integrate the four Zones and to guarantee German military weakness by joint East and West control of all German heavy industries; it means opening the eastward door to German exports which will otherwise collide with British exports.

The strengthening of the West should make it easier, not more difficult, to reach some such limited agreement between the occupying Powers. Russia is at least as fearful of America in the Ruhr as the West is of Russia in Eastern Europe. When Mr. Bevin meets his three colleagues later this year he need not, even now, throw up the Socialist sponge; he should confront them with the obvious fate that awaits us all if Germany is rearmed and try to persuade his colleagues to agree on the terms that they are jointly ready to offer to an inevitably resurrected Germany.

## DOLLARS VERSUS IDEAS

In the 1,054 pages of the White Book on American Relations with China none is more instructive than the Reports by Foreign Service Officers during the years 1943-45. These Officers pointed out that the Chinese Communists were influenced by Nationalism as well as Marxism; that they were the most dynamic force in China and were serious rivals for control of the country since the Kuomintang and National Government were disintegrating; that the Kuomintang was not only proving itself incapable of averting a collapse by its own initiative, but that the desire of its leaders to perpetuate their own power overrode all other considerations. They argued further that the suicidal policies of the Kuomintang had their roots in the nature of the Party which was unwilling to check inflation or take any other effective measures which would injure the landlord-capitalist class. One of them wrote prophetically, in June 1944:—

> "If we come to the rescue of the Kuomintang on its own terms we would be buttressing—but only temporarily—a decadent regime which by its existing composition and programme is incapable of solving China's problems. Both China and ourselves would be gaining only a brief respite from the ultimate day of reckoning."

In the years that followed, both before and since the end of the war, this analysis has been confirmed by a succession of distinguished American representatives. (They have agreed about the analysis even though they have made different proposals to avoid the logic of their conclusions.) "Chiang Kai-shek," General Stilwell wrote in September 1944, "has no intention of making further efforts to prosecute the war . . . (he believes he can go on milking the United States for money and munitions by using the old gag of quitting if he is not supported. He believes the war in the Pacific is nearly over, and that by delaying tactics he can throw the entire burden on us. He has no intention of instituting any real democratic regime or of forming a united front with the Communists." General Hurley, having failed to restore the united front, advised against American aid to the Communists when General Chu Teh asked for a loan of 20 million dollars in January 1945 for use in procuring the defection of officers and men of the Chinese puppet government and for sabotage work behind the Japanese lines. Chu Teh said that his forces would assume full responsibility for repayment of the loan following victory over Japan. George Acheson, then American Chargé d'Affaires in Chungking, did not agree with General Hurley, whose advice, however, was followed. The extremely able reports of General Marshall's Mission from November 1945 to January 1947 show that though the Communists were in part responsible for the breakdown, the chief blame was Chiang Kai-shek's. General Marshall was a disinterested intermediary. He prepared a succession of documents which should have served as bases for discussion; he often secured modifications of Communist demands. He frequently expressed the opinion that "the tactics being followed by the Government were such that in its efforts to prevent Communism the Government was creating conditions favourable for a Communist regime."

In spite of his patience and unquestioned integrity, General Marshall became the instrument of a policy which amounted to intervention on the side of the Kuomintang. The turning-point came in August 1946 when the Chinese and United States Governments signed an agreement for the sale of U.S. surplus property in various Pacific islands. General Marshall informed General Chou En-lai that it did not involve combat material. But transport was a war necessity and this transaction at a time when a Five-Man Committee seemed at the point of achieving a truce was seized upon as the occasion of a propaganda offensive by the Communists. "With respect to U.S. military aid programmes," the White Book admits, "General Marshall was being placed in the untenable position of mediating on the one hand between the two Chinese groups, while on the other the United States Government was continuing to supply arms and ammunition to one of the two groups, namely, the National Government."

General Marshall himself became increasingly sceptical of the usefulness of negotiations. In December 1946 he said that "the Communists were too large a military and civil force to be ignored, and that, even if one disregarded the brutality of the inevitable procedure necessary to destroy them, they probably could not be eliminated by military campaigning." His frank statement when he resigned in January 1947 came too late; the Communist propaganda offensive was now in full swing, the Americans had now become "the heir of German and Japanese Fascists."

One more effort was made. In July 1947, President Truman, in response to Ambassador Leighton Stuart's urgent reports of Kuomintang disintegration, sent General Wedemeyer on a fact-finding Mission. His Report was so scathing and his recommendations so drastic that the State Department with misplaced consideration for Kuomintang sensitivity withheld its publication until it appeared in the present White Book. It proposed a Five-Power (including the U.S.S.R.) guardianship for Manchuria, or a United Nations Trusteeship. His suggestions for China were almost identical with the programme of the Democratic League, whose influence at that time would have been greatly strengthened by the publication of the Report. Instead, the League was outlawed in October 1947, after some of its finest leaders had been assassinated.

Henceforth the civil war became a relentless struggle for power. Even a tentative offer by the Russians in January 1948 to mediate was turned down by Chiang Kai-shek who replied that "the Chinese Government neither desired nor believed possible any accommodation with the Chinese Communists." Ten months later, a high Government official, a strong supporter of Chiang Kai-shek, was quoted by Secretary of State Marshall as stating that 99 per cent. of the people were against the Government. Yet the American Embassy in Nanking recommended "that American efforts be designed to prevent the formation of a coalition government" which would include Communists.

Study of the frequent exchanges between Ambassador Leighton Stuart in Nanking and Secretary Marshall during those critical months of 1948 reveals the dilemma of American policy. Marshall wrote:

> To achieve the objective of reducing the Chinese Communists to a completely negligible factor in China, in the immediate future, it would be necessary for the United States virtually to take over the Chinese Government and administer its economic, military and governmental affairs. It would involve the United States Government in a continuing commitment from which it would practically be impossible to withdraw, and it would very probably involve grave consequences to this nation by making of China an area of international conflict . . .There is little evidence that the fundamental weakness of the Chinese Government can be basically corrected by foreign aid.

The American Government did not solve its dilemma. It adopted a policy which was virtually that of an operational alliance with the Chinese Government. The delivery of arms and ammunition was speeded; the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) functioned as an annex to the Chinese Defence Ministry. General Barr, its Director, when he advised its withdrawal in January 1949, concluded his Report: "Only a policy of unlimited United States aid including the immediate employment of United States armed forces to block the southern advance of the Communists, which I emphatically do not recommend, would enable the Nationalist Government to maintain a foothold in Southern China against a determined Communist advance . . . The complete defeat of the Nationalist Army . . . is inevitable." In the Chinese Air Force, which he dismissed as having accomplished very little, he said there was "an ingrained resentment against killing Chinese Communists who had no air support." Of the Navy he had no illusions; "from an economic viewpoint," he reported, it "could have been of inestimable value in suppressing smugglers in Hong Kong-Canton waters had it been willing to suppress and not to participate." The "faulty Nationalist traits and characteristics" he reflected had been "wisely subordinated" in the case of the Communists who "made their ideology of Communism almost a fetish."

That the failure of the Kuomintang was also the failure of American policy is the main lesson to be learnt from this White Book. Dean Acheson has just appointed three men to review America's policy in Asia and to chart a course which might avoid the shipwreck of her relations with China. Ambassador-at-large Philip C. Jessup is the Chairman; he comes fresh from the supervision of the White Book on China. His associates are Raymond B. Fosdick, President of the Rockefeller

Foundation and General Education Board and one-time Under-Secretary General of the League of Nations, and Dr. Everett Case, Assistant Secretary of General Electric. Citizens of a country which has 6 per cent. of the world's people and about half of its industrial resources, they have undertaken to plan a policy for half the world which is today in varying stages of social revolution. And since the future of all of us may be determined by their activities we have a right, indeed a duty, to ask whether they will meet the challenge of Asia. If the American genius for fact-finding is equalled by their ability to learn the lessons of history, they will advise the State Department to adapt itself to the facts of Nationalism, the most powerful stimulus in Asia today, and to the Socialism which is in Asia the only alternative to disintegration. They will recognise that the unpopular mantle of British Imperialism now largely covers their own shoulders. They will appreciate the central problem of Asia's millions—the need for food and land where the rice bowl, not the frigidaire, is the first necessity of life. They will try to understand that there are great social problems for which the possession of the atom bomb is an irritant, not a solution; that the masses of Asia, awakening to their independence, will not be roused to fight another war in the name of anti-Communism under the banner of a great power which is identified with Imperialism, however modified that Imperialism might be in practice. They must learn from their experience in China that dollars cannot defeat ideas.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

## A LONDON DIARY

MOST of us, I suppose, were cheered by the departure of British volunteers to fight the fires tearing through the forests round Bordeaux. This kind of gesture is worth a hundred orations about international co-operation. A gesture, of course, it is: little can be done to check a forest fire until the wind drops and the hot embers are douched by heavy rain. Cut firebreaks? The wind may carry sparks over, starting fresh outbreaks behind the firefighters. Water is short, the woods are dry and an army of firemen may be driven back by the flames, while units may be encircled. Our woods are usually too small or too damp to burn like this, but in the great forests beyond the Rockies, the Americans organise their firefighters like a guerilla army. A strike of lightning or a fag-end thrown from a car may start an inferno raging across scores of miles. Aircraft, parachutists and mechanised equipment are thrown in as into a battle. I remember a notice by the roadside in Idaho: "You can start a war," and it listed the penalties for acts of aggression against Nature. I hope the Kentish firemen have established a precedent. What could be better than volunteer teams of this kind, for any emergency, to tie peoples more closely together?

* * *

At last we have a first-hand picture of Mao Tse-tung during his life as Communist leader in Yenan. It appears in the new summer number of *Asian Horizon* (32, Victoria Street, S.W.1). It is brilliantly written and is by Robert Payne, whose account of being beaten up (by accident, as it were) in Paris, recently appeared in this journal, and whose large volume of Chinese poetry was reviewed here a fortnight ago. Robert Payne is a Liberal in politics—an individualist, a prolific writer, poet and novelist, who taught in China and who is as much at home in Pekin as in London, Paris or Washington. His main object in visiting Mao Tse-tung was to persuade him to allow the publication of a volume of his earlier poems; one or two of his poems have already been printed and are widely known outside China as well as within it. Mao Tse-tung refused. He said his poems were "stupid." It may be he thought that they were no longer suited to the circumstances of today. He insisted that he was "no one," a leader of the Chinese Communists just because he was merely one of themselves. The whole picture of Mao's life amongst the peasants, wearing no uniform or insignia to distinguish him from any ordinary soldier, suggests that he is genuinely one of those disinterested, personally unambitious, idealists, who make revolutions but who so seldom survive to carry them through to completion.

* * *

The discovery of the bones of St. Peter beneath the altar of the confession at St. Peter's in Rome has been described at considerable length in the *New York Times*. That such a discovery should have been made just before Holy Year, in which pilgrimage to Rome is being planned on an even more extensive and lucrative scale than usual, can only be ascribed to miraculous intervention. Inscriptions referring to St. Peter and coins of the right date were found freely scattered round the sarcophagus which has remained so strangely hidden throughout all these centuries. So far, it appears from the *New York Times*, only the Papal archaeologists, who were so wonderfully led to the right spot, have testified to the authenticity of the discovery. When their reports have been confirmed by other archaeologists who will include, I presume, some sceptics, the position of the Papacy will be considerably strengthened. Many scholars have questioned the historical accuracy of the First Century tradition by which St. Peter's was built over the very bones of St. Peter. From now onwards no one can question that the present Pope is a true successor of the Apostle Peter himself.

* * *

How precious to most people is the illusion that they are really *photogéniques*, and that all those depressing images—the libellous passport photo, the friend's unflattering snapshot, the stiffly posed synthetic studio portrait—are all the fault of the man behind the camera! If only one could be, simultaneously, the snapper and the snapped! Well, a friend tells me that one can. He was led, the other day, by an inquisitive young woman of his acquaintance to a London store where an enterprising French firm has installed experimentally a "self-photography" unit. Safe in the privacy of a sort of out-size telephone booth, air-conditioned and equipped with a comfortable swivel-chair and a special type of mirror which hides the camera and cunningly prevents you from presenting to it a too "solid" full face, you have possession of a remote-action shutter control. Compose the expression which (you like to think) is most truly Y O U; squeeze the little bulb; the job is done—at five bob for six shots. A "draw", I gather: pretty women, elderly frumps, chorus-boys and middle-aged business men who fancy they have a touch of Clark Gable about them, little people on the verge of having a dream realised, queue expectantly. Are they disillusioned? Hard to say. Led to the water, my friend declined to drink: some illusions, he says, are too precious to risk.

* * *

Amongst the names of those who gave evidence before the Royal Commission on the Press is that of Dr. Marie Stopes. I have in front of me a transcript of the evidence she submitted; it was not, as far as I can make out, included amongst the volumes of published evidence nor was any reference made to it in the Report. It is not easy to see why. If the Press Commissioners were looking for concrete evidence of successful pressure put on newspaper proprietors one would have thought that the evidence submitted by Dr. Stopes would have been well worth their comment. Her photostats of correspondence with newspaper proprietors and managers, and of advertisements of her books altered after being accepted, seem to be fairly conclusive. One national newspaper after another, which originally accepted advertisements for her various books on birth control arbitrarily refused to take them and even refused to print advertisements of her volumes of poetry. Sometimes they would take these if reference to her as the author of "Married Love" were deleted and she herself appeared as Marie Carmichael Stopes—a name under which she apparently went unrecognised. It may be correctly said—and I think that Dr. Stopes did not make enough point of this in her evidence—that her advertisements embarrassed the newspapers in question by leading to their confiscation in Ireland, where matter dealing with contraception is forbidden. But this clearly does not dispose of the whole story. She quotes, for instance, an article from the *Universe*, an English Catholic paper, boasting of the work of the Westminster Catholic Federation's Vigilance Committee. As a result of a protest from a member of the Committee, a big firm of wholesalers withdrew from his list advertisements of what was described as contraceptive propaganda. The firm "expressed their penitence and gave promises of amendment." Now that particular case occurred as long ago as 1923. I think that Dr. Stopes' evidence makes it clear that this type of pressure has continued.

* * *

A poet of my acquaintance has long wanted a copy of the poems of D. H. Lawrence. Most of the various editions are out of print. He did not know that a request for them in the more literary bookshops of central London would be met by surprised and embarrassed looks, clearly hinting that he was in search of pornography. In one shop, very full of people, a female assistant called out to another assistant: "*Pansies*! Isn't *Pansies* the one with all those suppressed poems in it?" All eyes on the floor were instantly directed to the luckless young man who shrank, he tells me, like one of those H. M. Batemen figures, caught red-handed in the commission of some unspeakable solecism.

* * *

Though Mr. Park has destroyed nine wasp's nests close at hand, including one in the thatch right by my bedroom window, there are still enough wasps about to reduce many of my lovely Cox's Orange Pippins to nesty empty shells. In dry weather the blackbirds first peck a hole and then the wasps go in and finish the job. There seemed nothing to do about it because even in this very early season it's no use picking Cox's and Bramleys and James Greaves in August. There were clouds about but Mr. Park did not think much of the chances of rain. To hear him talking you would think Essex was the Gobi desert, protected by the Himalayas. "Even when it rains elsewhere," he said, "it generally by-passes this village. There are only three ways a thunderstorm ever gets here. It can come up the Ongar valley . . ." and he outlined two other alternative routes by which a storm could make its way through the mountain fastnesses of Essex. And then seeing perhaps a quizzical look in my eye he said: "Yes, these are only the three ways. That's well-known fact." I had to leave it at that.

CRITIC

## THE RIGHTS OF MAN

(After James Russell Lowell)

We do believe in Human Rights
For Greece and Anatolia,
And for the Balkan satellites
And China and Mongolia.
In certain portions of the globe
Conditions are unsavoury,
And mankind's champions should probe
Intolerance and slavery.

We all believe the Rights of Man
Should have full recognition,
So long as sovereign States may ban
The Human Rights Commission.
To Europe's Court we give sincere
And unreserved adherence—
But let them give no judgment here
To curb State interference.

We do believe in Human Rights
For Chile and Siberia,
But Blacks are Blacks and Whites are Whites
In Kenya and Nigeria.
Democracy's Protectorates
Are free from persecution,
And seek no aid from Sister States
To streamline evolution.

We all believe the Rights of Man
Should end age-old subjection,
While barring no established plan
For industry's direction.
We do not mind a public fuss
On equal pay for labour—
These strictures don't apply to us,
But to our next-door-neighbour.

We do believe in Human Rights,
Like old Tom Paine and Rousseau,
And hope in time the Muscovites
Will be as free as Crusoe.
All have their obligations owned,
But with the best intention,
We have successfully postponed
The Human Rights Convention.

SAGITTARIUS

## THIS ENGLAND

**Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.**

"We are Englishmen and, as such, should be treated with some respect in Scotland." This was stated by two brothers when they appeared at Oban, Argyllshire.—*News of the World.* (H. Murray.)

"Fine William Pears, 8d. per lb. Just Like Tinned." Notice in window of Liverpool greengrocer.—(D. W. O'Kelly.)

Mr. T. G. Fendick, Education Officer for the Isle, has been appointed representative of the Isle Education Committee to serve on the Area Technological Sub-Committee for the Western Area of the East Anglian Regional Advisory Council for Further Education.—*Northants Evening Telegraph.* (Pied Piper.)

Again, very few English women think of wearing a bra in an intelligent manner. To get the full advantage of to-day's kind one should fall into them by bending forward from the waist downwards when putting them on. That this is known as putting on a bra in the American way speaks for itself. It is as important as straight stocking seams. —*Picture Post.* (Ivor Allen Morris.)

Neither was it the kind of office to attract a maniacal killer.—*Daily Express.* (J. A. Courcouf.)

We sympathise with Tito for exactly the same reason that even some Londoners may have hoped to see Worcester beat Middlesex at Lord's.—*Star.* (J. C.)

# SO THEY SAY . . .

### Department of Un-British Activities

*Sunday Pictorial*, August 21:

WE BRITISH ARE TIRED OF YANKEE INSULTS! Here is our reply to America's LIES and SLANDERS, by the editor of the *Pictorial* . . . We will democratically vote for the Government we want (Labour, Liberal, or Tory) whether or not it suits the book of your Wall Street wolves or power-drunk political wire-pullers . . . Too many of you Americans are being fooled by grasping bigoted tycoons, by brash around-the-world-in-one-day politicians, and your lying anti-British press.

*Reynold's News*, August 21:

THEY ARE SLINGING MUD AT BRITAIN—
By the Editor.

*The People*, August 21:

U.S. SLANDER CAMPAIGN HAS REACHED PEAK—'STOP THE SNEERS' WARNING TO AMERICANS

A full-scale counter-offensive against American critics of Britain was last night under way. First broadside was fired by War Minister Shinwell . . . "It is time," he said, "that both at home and abroad the sneering references to the decline of Great Britain were stopped . . . the game of twisting the lion's tail is a risky one . . ."

But some British papers were unimpressed.

*Manchester Guardian*, August 22:

THE DOLLAR CRISIS—A PRESS WRANGLE—BRITAIN BEING MISLED

*New York.*—Mr. Shinwell's boy on the burning deck speech is soberly reported here this morning, but mercifully it is not given a wide play . . . this is as it should be, for it is a reaction at high level to an affront offered here at the low level of some "tabloids" and a few diehard Congressmen . . . Unfortunately it seems to be understood in Britain as a crisis in Anglo-American relations. If it is such . . . it has been sparked by the sedulous rubbing together of British newsprint and British pride . . . this artificial yet damaging quarrel [is] almost wholly incited by the kind of press that is resolved to serve its public even if the service includes nothing but hydrophobia . . .

Or, if you perhaps suspect the political leanings of the *Manchester Guardian*, here are two other viewpoints which are rarely biased in the same direction.

*Daily Telegraph*, August 22:

One thing about which Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin can rest assured . . . next month is that the Americans will be just as eager as they are to find remedies . . .

*News Chronicle*, August 22:

The truth seems to be that Mr. Snyder, Mr. Acheson and their colleagues, though they have no power to promise huge dollar expenditures, will be prepared to consider actions by which the United States can contribute to the easing of the drain on British reserves.

### Who Started It?

*Daily Mirror*, August 22:

An article in the level-headed *New York Times* rebukes the British Tory press for misrepresenting the dollar crisis . . . [Its] correspondent in London says: "Almost every violent anti-British story printed in the United States, every criticism of the Socialist Government—all are gleefully cabled across the Atlantic to tease or torment the reading public. . .

When, one begins to wonder, did it all start? The *Manchester Guardian's* indefatigable Alastair Cooke has been investigating this very question.

After some digging around in malodorous places, one is fairly sure that the mischief started in a despatch sent to Britain by one of those newspapermen who have, in the apt phrase of the Royal Commission on the Press, a vested interest in sensationalism.

And shall we wonder, with *Tribune* (August 17), about the candidates for this unenviable encomium?

"Could it be," says *Tribune*, "that Mr. Don Iddon of the *Daily Mail* would appear high on the list?"

### Mr. Iddon

The *Mail* (August 3) declared that "Socialism has prevented the British people from working harder—at American expense. The result is almost an Anglo-American cold war. Don Iddon gives some examples in his article today." This is what Mr. Iddon had to say, in his customary restrained style.

BRITAIN AS THE 49th STATE

The wraps are off . . . every day in every way Britain is being told what to do, where to go, when to stop . . . the American press and politicians have taken over our affairs . . . I hope Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin know . . . they are due to be met by a screaming American eagle ready to use its claws and beak.

Two days later Mr. Iddon made the *Mail's* front page.

U.S. CRITICISM GROWS: 'BRITISH SLACK, APATHETIC'

Confidential reports to President Truman . . of the British recovery effort and Britain's military establishment have now become extremely critical.

Then, on August 9, he sent the despatch that Alastair Cooke seems to have had in mind.

BRITAIN IS BURIED BY PRESS IN AMERICA

Today in New York could have been appropriately called "Bury Britain" day. One newspaper despatch after another told of gloom, crisis, a drop in prestige, and wide criticism.

The next day he followed it up in his "Diary."

Everyone and his grandmother, except the Russians, have lined up here [in Washington] holding out their hands and their hats. Usually we have been at the head of the queue . . . And always we have turned up with the same worn alibi: "The Capitalist money just slipped through our Socialist fingers—now another little loan couldn't do us any harm." Washington's answer is "Nothing doing."

### Is Britain on the Rocks?

And the day after that (August 11) the *Daily Mail* introduced its readers to that now-familiar shipwreck picture: "Utopia On The Rocks—British Socialism in Action," the full-page advertisements in the Scripps-Howard newspapers announcing their forthcoming series of articles.

"Twenty million will read this," added the *Daily Mail.*

By this time, however other voices were being heard—although not, of course, in the *Daily Mail.*

*Observer*, August 7:

This [critical] attitude is not shared by the chief members of the Administration, or by the best-informed political commentators on big Metropolitan newspapers, who recognise both the dangers of such hostile criticism and how ill-informed much of it is . . . a number of newspapers in various parts of the country have devoted much space to a friendly analysis of British difficulties which they have declared should be related to the international situation, not to the domestic Socialist programmes which America has no right to influence . . .

*Daily Mail*, August 16:

AMERICA SEES BRITAIN ON THE ROCKS

*Daily Express*, August 16:

AN AMERICAN GIVES AMERICA THIS CLOSE-UP OF BRITAIN: OVER-TAXED, OVER-NURSED, OVER-OPTIMISTIC

*Daily Telegraph*, August 16:

Other major New York newspapers also have pessimistic comment on Britain's position. Stewart Alsop . . . of the New York *Herald-Tribune*, writes . . . "It is now entirely possible that the collapse of Britain as a great world power will take place within the next 12 to 18 months. . . ."

*News Chronicle*, August 16:

U.S. CRITICS OF BRITAIN ARE "UNJUST"

Some of the best-informed foreign observers of the British economic scene consider that much American criticism of British policy is either unjust, unreasonable, or irrelevant . . . wrote [Clifton Daniel] in his despatch to the *New York Times* . . .

But still the *Mail* and *Express* continued to print the Scripps-Howard articles (the *Express* said that it was letting its readers "share the fascination of knowing what other people are saying about them"). Mr. Don Iddon, however, appears to have begun to realise that his bit of stone-casting had become an avalanche.

I have tried to present the American viewpoint lately, but these excesses are too much to stomach. Blaming Socialism is one thing—and no doubt the right thing—but this wallowing in Britain's travail is obscene.

But on the same day, August 17, Mr. Iddon hit the front page as well: "U.S. SAYS 'BRING EDEN'." This proposal having appeared sufficiently irrelevant to provoke immediate disclaimers from both British and American Governments, it was denied—although not in the *Mail* or *Express*. Meanwhile the Scripps-Howard articles continued (even the *Daily Worker* quoted extracts, heading them "Fairy Tales For Wall Street"), but for some reason neither the *Mail* nor the *Express* printed the sixth in the series (August 22), although the *Mail* resumed with the seventh the following day. Could this unfortunate omission have had anything to do with the contents of the missing article?

*Sunday Express*, August 21:

In his sixth article, Mr. Leech . . . says: Britain's famous medical plan is here to stay. It is the one Socialist creation that is popular in Conservative as well as Labour Party ranks. . . . Even severe critics of State medicine admit it has done much good for the poor, and, faults or no faults, the British people plan to hang on to what they now have . . .

The events of last weekend, however, appear to have brought matters to a head. Mr. Tom O'Brien, M.P., declared that "Britons would rather take the risk of civilising Communism than be kicked around by unlettered, pot-bellied American magnates." A number of more sober American newspapers called for a "truce in the wordy warfare".

But the choicest, the most delectable *coup de théâtre*, was the performance of the *Daily Mail* on August 23, when it began to realise that someone had been causing trouble, and with superb indignation assailed the mischief-makers.

It is time the slanging between America and Britain came to an end. It is time certain journalists and politicians on both sides of the Atlantic tried to cultivate a sense of responsibility . . . Fundamentally . . . no blame for our present position rests upon the Socialists. We have said that over and over again . . .

AUTOLYCUS

# PLANNERS' PLASTIC SURGERY

THE authors of the recently published outline plan for the physical development and conservation of North-East England—Durham County, South Northumberland and the Cleveland district of Yorkshire—had necessarily to take account of the fact that, before the war, this area held England's heaviest concentration of unemployment. In 1929, over 60 per cent. of the labour force depended on heavy industry; and half the male workers were engaged in coal-mining, the ship-yards or iron and steel works. During the slump of the 'Thirties, practically the entire male population of ship-building centres such as Jarrow or Hebburn were idle; scores of mining villages in Durham fell into decay; and even at a time of industrial revival, in 1937, a quarter of Sunderland's workers were still on the dole. Large-scale unemployment disappeared from the North-East at the beginning of the war, and has not returned since. Yet its memories continue to haunt, especially with coal reserves declining in many parts of Durham and a recession in ship-building and ship-repairing constantly forecast.

Apart, however, from the ghost of unemployment, Sir George Pepler and Mr. P. W. MacFarlane were also confronted by several "special problems." The furious pursuit of production and profit in the 19th century led, in the North-East, to a scramble for industrial sites and an unparalleled spoilation of the countryside. "People were herded in squalor around their workplaces"; and the high birthrate helped to create the most densely populated area in the country. Another special problem arose through subsidence as a result of coal-mining. Large tracts of land in Durham and Northumberland had to be abandoned from the building point of view owing to existing coal deposits or too recent extraction. The authors, therefore, had to shape their plan according to (often conflicting) estimates of life expectation of coal seams.

Dependence on heavy industry is far less pronounced in the North-east today than it was in 1929. Yet 43 per cent. of the insured population still depend on it for their living; and the authors of the plan, while envisaging the continuation of the present trend to correct the chronic "economic unbalance" of the area, admit that no substantial change of its industrial structure can be contemplated.

For better or for worse, Britain's main industrial areas are fixed and their character largely determined by past developments. So long as ships are needed, they will continue to be built on the rivers of the North-east coast; so long as the nation depends upon iron and steel and can pay for the import of rich foreign ores, Teesside will be a great steel area; so long as coal remains the motive power for heat and light, coal-mining will be a dominant industry.

Within these limits, however, Sir George and his colleague have devised an attempt at plastic surgery on a scale never before attempted in Britain: their aim is to cover up or eliminate the ravages of the Industrial Revolution.

The main human needs are easy access to work-places, de-congestion of crowded areas and provision of better surroundings for home, work and recreation. The traditional desire for single-family dwellings is met by the plan, and people are left in their present homes as far as possible Yet the inconvenience of moving cannot altogether be avoided, especially in areas of short-life pits in many parts of Durham. It is estimated that at least 30,000 miners will be redundant in thirty years; and, in view of the derelict and congested state of many mining settlements, it would be unwise to introduce enough light industries to absorb all the displaced miners locally, even if this were possible. A fraction might find work at the growing trading estate at Aycliffe, near the proposed new town. Another new town is contemplated near Durham City, with an adjoining trading estate. The public services of the new town of Peterlee should also provide employment for a number of displaced Durham folk. But, for the majority of the redundant, migration is held to be the only solution. The great industrial expansion expected at Teesside may absorb many; and to house additional labour, the small seaside resort of Redcar and the agricultural township of Guisborough in the Cleveland area would be considerably expanded. Others would have to leave the area; and, for some, leaving the country altogether is recommended.

Congestion on Tyneside—where 860,000 people live in and around Newcastle and Gateshead in the most unsightly and depressing "dormitory" settlements found anywhere in the country—would be relieved by two "quasi-new towns"; i.e., residential areas without major industries. Several villages, mostly in Durham, would disappear; others would be thinned out, and the surplus population "steered" to convenient centres. In the authors' view, such places are not worth maintaining after the opportunities for local work have gone.

But the most important feature of the plan is the "plastic surgery." Besides the new towns and the expansion and modernisation of existing ones, there would be a great clean-up of areas littered with derelict houses, factories and ship-yards and other relics of a civilisation that sacrificed natural beauty to quick profits. Some roads are designated "scenic" and care is to be taken to preserve and improve their environment. Green belts, wedges and open spaces in the most congested areas would once again enable their inhabitants to enjoy Nature at close quarters. Due regard is paid to such local beauty spots as Durham Cathedral, the numerous old castles, parks and churches, the Roman remains and the upper reaches of the rivers Tees, Wear and Derwent which remained intact after two centuries of unrestricted industrialisation.

For the execution of the plan, whose cost would run into hundreds of millions, and whose completion might take 35–40 years, the authors envisage an overall planning authority—a sort of super-Development Corporation. This, one suspects, may prove to be the most controversial aspect of the plan. County councils have become planning authorities under the 1947 Act and they would be reluctant to part with their newly-won powers in favour of a planning authority appointed by and controlled from Whitehall. Local authorities—there are 35 in County Durham alone—are doubtless aware of the benefits the plan would confer on their areas; and many may feel that its execution would entail financial commitments far beyond their limited means. Yet it would be too much to expect them to resign their statutory powers without protest.

In the case of Peterlee—the new town planned in the Easington area of East Durham—friction between the Development Corporation and the local authority reached such a pitch early this year that the latter sought the Prime Minister's intervention. The local authority said the Corporation's reluctance in giving information impaired efficiency in conducting local affairs while the locals were charged with meddling in what was purely the Corporation's business. The affair was eventually smoothed out, and peace—

or at least a truce—reigns today. But Peterlee Corporation operates in a local authority area catering for 85,000 people. The Peplar-MacFarlane plan affects an area containing nearly 2,500,000. The task of reconciling the need for overall planning with the no less real need to respect the wishes, traditions and idiosyncrasies of the local populace and their (often "prickly") representatives would be formidable. Yet it is difficult to dispute the authors' argument that, unless an overall planning authority is appointed, the whole effort may be "frittered away on unrelated, unprogrammed and, in some cases, futile objectives."

ANDREW HARGRAVE

## TELEPATHY

I HAVE just listened in to a telepathy broadcast. In the first of the tests given, the names of ten cricketers were written on a blackboard and the "receiver" in the test got two right. The mistake occurred when "Bedser" was given instead of "Bailey," those being the only two names which began with the letter B. The second test was concerned with Rhine cards. A five-point star, three wavy lines, and a square were selected for "transmission." Only the square was given correctly. Much more successful was the "transmitting" of tunes even when the telepathic process was carried on, not in silence as in the other tests, but while an organ was being played. Finally, one particular person was picked out of an audience of two hundred by means of telepathic communication.

It is possible that the presence of the microphone has a disturbing effect on such occasions, but as I listened I could not help regretting that I did not bring the names of two airmen I knew during the war to the attention of the scientists who are investigating extra-sensory perception. One of them was called Scathard and had his home in Nottingham, to which he returned on demobilisation: the other, Stephenson by name, lived in Beckenham. It may still be possible for long-distance experiments to be carried out by these two.

I was an education officer at the time and had to deal with many inquiries about careers and so on. Stephenson came into my office one morning with a letter from a theatrical agent about which he wanted my advice. The agent was offering him and his friend a moderate fee to put on an act for a week at a London night club. When I asked what the act was, he said it was a mind-reading act. I said I'd like to see it. Scathard, who was waiting outside, was called in. My part in the demonstration was explained to me. All I had to do was to take a coin at random from my pocket and give it to Scathard. Stephenson went to the other side of the office. Scathard stood beside me with his back to Stephenson. I took a coin from my pocket and gave it to Scathard. He looked at it and assumed an attitude of intense concentration. No word was spoken and they could not see one another; yet after a second or two Stephenson said, "It's a two-shilling piece, and the date is 1924." That answer was correct.

This was during the days of vocational training and resettlement. I persuaded the officer in charge of their section to let them have seven days' leave together. They went to London, put on their act at a club in Beak Street with great success, and came back to the station.

By this time I had made arrangements for a more sustained test of their powers. A young man from Oxford had been giving weekly lectures on psychology on the station, and I asked him to be an outside witness. About a hundred airmen and airwomen turned up in the hope of catching Stephenson and Scathard out. Many came with foreign coins, the procedure being well known on the station by this time; and, fortunately as it turned out, there was one officer on the station so convinced that the whole thing was fraud that he put off an engagement that evening in order to expose the trick.

During the tests Scathard stood among the audience with his back to Stephenson who stood near the psychologist and myself in an open space in front. They began with cards, an unconvincing beginning because cards are associated with so many tricks. Nevertheless half a dozen cards were picked out at random from the pack by the psychologist, myself, and members of the audience, and handed separately to Scathard who looked at them one at a time, and concentrated. In each case Stephenson promptly named the correct card. Then they went on to coins. Canadian coins, French coins, British coins and a West Indian coin. Again there was a hundred per cent. success, the date and the country of origin being correctly given in each case.

Members of the audience were next asked to write down their dates of birth and their favourite colour. One at a time these were handed to Scathard, none of them ever coming near Stephenson. Three or four such dates and favourite colours were given correctly and still, until the answer was given, neither of the pair uttered a word. All the time Scathard had his back towards Stephenson, who paced casually to and fro, gazing into the air, while Scathard concentrated till his face grew pale and beads of sweat stood on his brow. Immediately after Stephenson had answered, Scathard would say, "Right!"

At this point I interposed and asked the sceptical officer to write down his date of birth and his favourite colour. He passed the paper to Scathard. A second or so later Stephenson said, "Date of birth, 9th September, 1913, and your favourite colour is black." This time Scathard remained silent. Immediately Stephenson said: "No—1918!" "Right!" Scathard said. Then Stephenson added: "But you've written something else." "What is it?" asked the officer. Scathard concentrated even more than he had so far done. Stephenson gazed into space for several tense seconds. Then he shook his head quickly, impatiently as though someone had struck him a blow. "It's no good," he said. "Can't get it!" "Try again," said Scathard without looking round, and these were the only words spoken while a test was in progress. They got down to it again and soon Stephenson said triumphantly, "Manchester." Again that was right.

I asked them afterwards about this and Scathard said that the first time he tried to transmit "Manchester" he thought of the whole word; the second time he thought first "Man," then "chest" and that was enough. The confusion between the 3 and the 8 indicated that all this was done by means of visual images. Stephenson told me that the answers appeared as if written on a blackboard.

So far I have set down those things which happened in my presence. There were one or two other interesting things about these two men. They told me they had discovered this faculty while playing cards in the billet one night. They had practised with cards first, then with objects and words; and with practice facility increased. One of them was quite worried at times about the queerness of it all and sought reassurance that he was just an ordinary chap. "You know what these stage people are," he said. "I wouldn't like to be another of them!"

Several people told me that one of the entertainments in the local pub was to see the two of them playing dominoes with the blank side upwards. It was amusing to watch a man glancing at a row of blank dominoes and saying, "Pass," while the other triumphantly added one more blank to the row. When the dominoes were turned face-upwards, however, it was always seen that the game had been played according to Hoyle. I was told, too, that when they were working together Scathard, in the belly of an aircraft, would think, "Half . . . inch . . . spanner," and Stephenson without a word—why shout above the roar of aircraft engines?—would hand one in to him from the tool-kit outside.

HUNTER DIACK

## LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

*Isle of Wight*

. . . I had to return here on a Saturday, along with a great crowd of holiday-makers, and there was a long hot wait at Brockenhurst and then another, longer and hotter, on the quay at Lymington, where we were finally packed into an old paddle-boat, kept for such occasions. No food and drink of course; and it was long past lunch time when we slowly lurched into Yarmouth; but J., guessing the delay, had dashed home again and put a bowl of lobster salad in the car—a touch of genius, this. In the train I listened to an elderly journalist, who left Fleet Street for the country and had recently had some job that took him to remote hamlets in Hampshire, Berkshire and several other counties. Describing these places, his talk was filled with mad old rectors, eccentric spinsters, Jacobites, Rosicrucians, all unsuitable subjects for a planned economy, so many crazy passengers on the groaning ship, but delighting me as they had delighted him. But he added that even in these remote places all the old crafts were fast disappearing, for the young men did not take to them. This is not mere economics. You can actually make more money with some of the crafts—thatching, for instance—than you can in a garage or engineering shed. No, what moves these young men is the spirit of the age, the adoration of the Machine, which claims its own. And, incidentally, revenges itself on those of us who are unwilling to prostrate our minds before it. Thus, any bit of mechanism or gadget soon refuses to work for me. Even watches and clocks are hostile, knowing me to be of the other party, probably excommunicated, by Spring, Cog, Wheel, by the Great Machine itself. There are strange depths here, my friend.

Baking with the crowd on the quay, and then afterwards on the ferry, I amused myself by examining the faces of my fellow travellers. There was all history in them. Some giggling girl would have a long liquid eye that might have come straight from Syria. An aunt, clutching the children's buckets and spades, would sniff the sea breeze and display the profile of a Roman matron. A youth on his way to a holiday camp, and doing his best to look and behave like a jazz band leader, might have the exquisitely wide cheek bones of the Slav. A harassed father, staining his sports shirt with sweat, would lift the proud curved nose of the Phoenician. There were misty pale eyes from the fiords, and hawk eyes from the desert. What fantastic wanderings, matings, meetings and partings were recorded in these faces! A whole library of travel, adventure history, could never do justice to them. We shut ourselves up to read, hurrying away from the mob so that we may learn and appreciate what mankind has suffered and accomplished; and all the time the true epic of our species is there,

magnificently stated in bone and flesh and pigment, in the faces of any crowd. But that did not prevent my hurrying away at Yarmouth, all one huge sigh of relief.

Are we English a lazy people? The question keeps popping up and you must have heard or read it several times lately yourself. (But let me add here that I find myself deeply irritated by the advice of some visiting American business men, who keep telling us how we can improve our methods of manufacture in order to capture their markets, when all the time I am certain that whatever we do, we shall never be allowed to capture those markets. It is the story of our films all over again. There will always be some ostensible reason why they will not do.) I consider myself fully qualified to answer this question about the laziness of the English. I am a fairly typical Englishman myself, and have to work, in various capacities, with a lot of other fairly typical Englishmen. So here goes. We English certainly do not like working for work's sake. There is nothing inside us that cries to be set going at an early hour and kept at it until a late hour. We have no private passion for being industrious. For a short time, after the Armistice of the First World War, I had to look after several hundred German prisoners, and I remember how astonished I was at their methodical industry, for they worked like beavers or ants. That is not the English way. Yet on the other hand, we are not an inert and listless people, as all our history clearly proves. We are in fact capable of making sudden enormous efforts, performing astonishing feats, as we did just after Dunkirk. Bearing this in mind, I have come to the conclusion that most Englishmen have exactly the same attitude towards work that I have myself. Now one reason why it suits me to be a writer is that I can use my energy in spurts, sometimes working like blazes and at other times merely idling and dreaming. I like a dramatic reason for working hard, so that I am not simply slogging away but feel that I have been plunged into an adventure. And this I believe to be the typical English attitude. I notice it among the men who work on the farm, at present toiling homerically to finish the harvest before the weather breaks. That is why the English make good agricultural workers, and are excellent at building railways, bridges and the like. And for the same reason, we are not the best people for high-pressure mass production, unless it is specially contrived, as it was sometimes during the war, to encourage spasmodic bursts of energy. So it seems to me that our economy should be based on this fact that we are neither steadily industrious nor downright lazy but intermittent types, the maniac-depressives of the workshop.

Yesterday I made one of a party from this house that went down to the farm to do some stooking. We combine most of the fields but cannot do all of them, so there has to be some stooking. In these parts we aim at eleven sheaves to the stook, and there was a wind blowing and rather too much thistle among the wheat. At first we worked in pairs, and my partner was a young man from Cambridge who is T.'s vacation tutor. He told me that last year he had worked at a harvest camp at Fonthill, Beckford's old Folly, then occupied by the local Agricultural Committee and its party of amateur harvesters. In return I told him about Beckford, with his million in cash and income of a hundred thousand a year, his Oriental magnificence and silliness: a wasted man, for he had great abilities and might have used them properly if he had not found himself possessed of so much money and irresponsible power. Later in the afternoon, when we made up our minds to finish that field or burst, I discovered that we amateurs worked much better on these large stooks not in pairs but altogether, setting up the sheaves almost simultaneously. And of course there may be a lesson in that. My general views of stooking may be expressed in the Clerihew style:

Setting up stooks
Is harder than writing books;
But when it is done,
It seems to have been more fun.

I am now ready to outline a programme for the next important International Conference. It will be a three-day conference. On the first day, no speeches by delegates will be allowed, but there will appear on the platform a tiny twinkling-eyed Chinese sage who will read, very slowly, the *Book of Tao* by Laotse. No comments, no interruptions, will be tolerated; and no delegate may leave the room during the reading. On the second day, all delegates will be taken to an enormous field, a formidable vista of heavy wheatsheaves, and will be required to stook the lot. On the third morning, they will attend to their business and settle it like the sensible men they will then be; and the remainder of the day will be devoted to eating, drinking, singing and the exchange of humorous bawdy stories.

I have a further contribution to make to international affairs. From all the propaganda sheets that find their way into this house, I gather that no nation really wishes to attack any other nation but merely wishes to defend itself against the aggressive designs of those monsters elsewhere. I suggest therefore that we all stop wasting time, money, energy making atom bombs, rockets, shells, war planes, tanks, machine-guns and the rest; and instead of this dreary routine of destruction, which gives no sane man any pleasure, we make all manner of things to instruct and amuse us. But—the cry will go up—we must protect ourselves. Certainly. We cannot go entirely unprotected; so we all manufacture, at a very reasonable cost, enough sharp knives and lengths of lead piping to equip every man and woman in every country. These knives and lengths of lead piping cannot be used abroad but only at home, to crack the heads or slit the gullets of any invaders. This scheme too has the advantage of satisfying those among us who believe that man is essentially a belligerent and bloodthirsty creature. For if he is, then merely working in armament factories or pulling levers to drop bombs cannot possibly satisfy his aggressive instincts; whereas some close bloody work with knives and lead piping ought, if necessary, to make him feel much better. And if the nations will not accept this scheme, then I shall suspect, what indeed I have already suspected, that either the nations are telling lies or are talking in their sleep.

An odd thing. I have just finished reading a new detective novel by an accomplished woman writer of such tales. There is an old witch in this novel; and she is a real witch, and introduced into it, I fancy, for the author's own pleasure. Now during the last few months I must have met at least half-a-dozen such witches in feminine fiction. Odd, but not beyond explanation.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(*From "The New Statesman," August*, 1924)

. . . It is absurd to take seriously the invective of the *Daily Mail*. Unfortunately the majority of Irishmen know England only through the Harmsworth Press, and the Republicans, like good tacticians, are proclaiming from one end of the country to the other that what the *Daily Mail* says to-day Downing Street will do to-morrow.

# The Arts and Entertainment

## LULU

I HAD hoped to write about several Continental opera broadcasts with which the B.B.C. has enlivened our summer evenings: from Salzburg, *Fidelio*, with Mme Flagstad in noble voice; *Die Zauberflöte*, with a startlingly powerful and accurate Queen of the Night (Wilma Lipp: impresarios, please note!), and a sadly mutilated version of *La Clemenza di Tito*; and, from Prague and Milan respectively, two deliciously fresh, unfamiliar comedies—Smetana's *Two Widows* (with Beno Blachut, who always sounds like the best tenor in the world) and Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto*. But all these various delights must yield place to the superb Vienna radio performance of Alban Berg's *Lulu*, which was broadcast twice during last week. When Berg died in 1935 he left his second opera complete, except for the orchestration of most of its third and last act. In its unfinished state *Lulu* was performed four times in Zürich in 1937; a very fine production, which I was lucky enough to see. The recent broadcasts confirm my previous impression that, if only one of Berg's friends (perhaps Krenek?) would undertake the labour of completing the score, the opera would have a theatrical future, despite the fact that its libretto so evidently belongs to a deeply unfashionable past.

The plays of Frank Wedekind have few champions to-day: with their mixture of realism and expressionism, the erotic and the sordid, they form the intellectual Grand Guignol of the German 'nineties; what was new in them has since been said over and over again, by German artists of the Republican *Dreigroschenoper* period, by D. H. Lawrence, by a hundred gangster films, by the ubiquitous psychological textbook. Nevertheless, they have real merits: dialogue as sharp as the edge of a knife, a quick eye for character, a sure sense of the stage. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy has told us how he encountered a very early performance of *Erdgeist* (the first of the two Lulu plays) while a student in Leipzig; riveted, he went three times running. In 1905 Alban Berg saw in Vienna the first performance of its sequel, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, and on him too it made an indelible impression. What fascinated him above all was the figure of the *femme fatale*, Lulu. Lulu has been the object of much quasi-philosophical talk in Germany, where she has even been dignified with the status of *Urweib*—an *Ewig-Weibliche*, however, which draws us, not upwards like Goethe's, but downhill; the two plays tell of the ruin she brings on her many lovers, and finally on herself. Though she makes a fine theatrical war-horse, a Carmen up to date, there was never anything profound in the conception of Lulu. Wedekind himself, it is interesting to discover, considered not Lulu, but the self-sacrificing Lesbian Countess Geschwitz, to be the real tragic heroine of his piece.

In the opera Lulu occupies the dead centre of the whirlpool; Berg saw her as the female counterpart of Don Juan, but the parallel is incomplete, because Lulu seldom plays an active part in the successive episodes; she is merely the irresistible object of attraction, all the more irresistible because she remains cold herself, a graceful animal, a creature of instinct, without conscience and without reflection. Berg's handling of this conception in terms of music is wonderful; the texture of *Lulu* is softer, more lyrical, and still more fascinating in tone-colour than that of *Wozzeck*; frequent use of saxophone and vibraphone lend to parts of the score an insinuating charm and an eerie glitter like nothing else in music; and it was a brilliant stroke to make Lulu herself a high coloratura, with the vocal line threading its way softly through a maze of melismata. (The original Lulu, Nuri Hadzic, realised this aspect

of the music to perfection; Ilona Steingruber, who sang in the broadcast, could not quite achieve a *pianissimo* in these regions, although in all other respects she was masterly, conveying without vulgarity all the animality of the part, and moulding every phrase with an icily accurate legato reminiscent of Ljuba Welitsch.)

In *Lulu*, as in so much of Berg's work, we find again the curious paradox of a man whose intellectual sympathies are *avant-garde*, while his sentiments belong to the romantic age: a man who can use Arnold Schönberg's latest twelve-tone-technique to depict a light woman of the 'nineties. If you read the musical analyses and try to work them out in the score of *Lulu*, you will be tempted to conclude that the whole thing is a crossword puzzle; but when you hear it, above all when you see it on the stage, you quickly perceive that you are in the presence of genius. The twelve-tone-technique is evidently a mere scaffolding of no importance to the finished work; and why Berg should have felt the need of it for the construction of *Lulu*, while *Wozzeck* did quite happily without, must remain a mystery. Even were it finished, I doubt if *Lulu* would reach the artistic level, or attain the popularity, of its predecessor; the superior imaginative level of Büchner's play, its noble pity, and its greater malleability from a musical point of view, all tell heavily in favour of *Wozzeck*. All the same, the world of modern opera is not so rich that we can afford to shelve *Lulu*. The first act, in particular, is wonderfully brilliant; it is difficult to imagine an audience feeling bored by it. The intermezzo between the second and third scenes is as powerful as anything in *Wozzeck*, and the end of the act, in which Lulu dictates to one of her admirers a letter to his fiancée breaking off his engagement, is immensely effective.

By the second act, however, we begin to feel that the compression of Wedekind's seven acts into the three of *Lulu* is going to provide more material than music can digest. Berg himself seems to have felt this when he decided on a desperate expedient, one of those wildly unpractical notions which sometimes visit men of genius; the orchestral interlude in the middle of the second act was to be accompanied by a silent film, covering Lulu's trial and imprisonment. (In Zürich a film was dutifully made and shown, but it could well be omitted and the information conveyed in the programme.) The wonder is that, with so much plot on his hands, Berg contrived to bring musically to life so many of the minor characters: the asthmatic old pander, Schigolch, for instance, and the schoolboy who was misleadingly billed in the *Radio Times* as a "gymnast." Considering her importance, Countess Geschwitz remains a shadowy figure, though doubtless much is made of her in the missing parts of the third act; her final lament over the murdered Lulu was eloquent, almost noble. The sooner this act is reconstructed the better, for *Lulu* is yet another instance of the power of music to transfigure the most commonplace or sordid material, to cast a veil of beauty over the proceedings of the police-court gazette.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

## BRYANSTON SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ALTHOUGH only in its second year, the Bryanston Summer School of Music seems already an established and indispensable feature of English musical life; combining the functions of school, festival and holiday camp, it caters ingeniously for almost every level of professional or amateur attainment. William Glock has succeeded in enticing some of the most stimulating teachers in the world to this delightful spot: last year Paul Hindemith and Nadia Boulanger; this year Mlle Boulanger again, and the great violin teacher, Georges Enesco—not to mention a well chosen contingent from England. If the programme has a fault, it is that its richness in good things encourages over-indulgence. The stranger who drops in for an evening is certain of hearing an excellent concert, unlucky if the programme does not contain much that is unfamiliar as well as beautiful. Listening to music in such rural informality is quite different from concert-going in London, partly because the awareness that everyone is there solely for the love of music permeates the room and stimulates both performer and listener. One evening last week, the London Chamber Choir under Anthony Bernard sang French secular music with delightful verve, while Monique Haas played Rameau, Couperin and Ravel, adding a Scarlatti encore in the most sparkling and musicianly style imaginable. Meanwhile, through the tall open windows one could see the sky turn pale blue, then an opalescent pink, then the deep blue of a summer night, while the huge expanse of wooded Dorset landscape faded into invisibility. No wonder people enjoy themselves at Bryanston.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

## THE MALVERN FESTIVAL

THE twelfth Malvern Festival opened with a flourish on August 8th with Shaw's *The Apple Cart* twenty years exactly after the opening Festival for which it was originally written. If this account of a week of critical playgoing appears severe it must not be taken as an injunction to stay away. On balance there is much enjoyment to be had, not only in the sprawling Malvern Hills but also at the theatre, now considerably improved by the addition of a £3,000 lighting installation and a £20,000 annexe containing comfortable dressing-rooms, spacious green-room, electric lift and bathrooms for the actors. Attractive, too, is the town itself, becomingly decorated by bunting and flags, which, however, by no means represent the many nationalities now crowding in to see the first English performance of Mr. Shaw's *Buoyant Billions*, which was discussed separately in this column last week.

The production and performances of the first five plays were generally inadequate for a festival season. Despite the imprimatur of Arts Council association and the financial benefactions of *The Sunday Times* and the Worcestershire Sauce industry, the guiding hand of an inspired administration was not to be seen. Roy Limbert's achievements in surmounting economic and other difficulties and the local authority's improvement of backstage conditions in their theatre are praiseworthy. But more money must be spent and greater talents involved if Malvern is to hold its own besides Edinburgh or Salzburg.

*The Apple Cart* and *In Good King Charles's Golden Days* were conceived by their producers as dramatised Platonic dialogues, and the actors were arranged statically in a semi-circle across the stage (this arrangement was also used in the third Shaw play). The poor ventilation in the auditorium furthered the tendency to slumber induced by Donald Eccles' ably spoken but somewhat insignificant King Magnus and Ernest Thesiger's petulant and senescent Charles II. Denis Cannan, however, not only shone in both plays (he was admirable, besides, in two others) but also contributed a welcome and promising first play. In *Max* an Englishman visits the family of the enemy soldier he has killed in battle. His curiosity to discover if he may not have slain a potential Wagner or Goethe touches off a series of unexpected revelations. The treatment is throughout serious and intelligent, though at times immature, and the symbolical identification of the hero with the dead Max, who was a sexual and political sadist, lifts the writing on to a super-naturalistic, almost poetic, plane.

Miss Daviot's *The Stars Bow Down* aims to give those moments in the story of Joseph's career as Governor of Egypt with which the Pentateuchal scribes were not concerned. (The first scene should be omitted.) The motivation of Potiphar's behaviour after the incident between Joseph and his wife—written, like the remainder of the play, so superficially as to make the chronicle eminently suitable for youthful audiences—is psychologically acceptable and culminates in the tender and moving moment of Joseph's reconciliation with Potiphar's daughter.

The third new play, *The Tressinghams*, by Lewis Wood, was jejune and unconsciously burlesqued the style of its writing, which belongs to an era of dramaturgy now mercifully forgotten. It was written as a vehicle for Mr. Thesiger, who drew an endearing portrait of a Victorian nonagenarian. Denholm Elliott plays the young man who falls off his horse on to the girl he will love and would marry, until he finds out that she is his half-sister (a theme, incidentally, that would lend itself to a play of tragic proportions and impact). His experiences should be a caution to all equestrians. Mr. Elliott acquits himself well in the character's hysterical moments and is an actor to be watched.

The surprise of the season was Frances Day, who filled out the part of Orinthia with likeable felinity. Her technical achievement and a certain outward charm suggest latent histrionic powers that should not be neglected. On their discernment in bringing her into the company both Mr. Limbert and Mr. Shaw are to be complimented.

OSSIA TRILLING

## THE MOVIES

### "The Undercover Man," at the Plaza

How far, I wonder, is it the fact that American citizens live under a private terror? "Protection" is the mild local word, like "transport difficulties" in Berlin or the long-ago "Manchurian affair"; and under its wing nestle guns and limousines, bullets whistle along a sidewalk, the headlines leap to four inches, jurors are bribed, witnesses grow mum, and the possibility of avenging murder rests with an income-tax charge. To this the Big Fellow—"widow-making, un-childing, unfathering," like Hopkins's deeps—has brought us. Was there a slip in his return for 1946? Then the income-tax experts, the dead-eye accountants with lens and gun, will winkle it out. The moral must be that, while you contribute first, in the end he pays. Or so, from start to finish, we are led to believe.

But how far is it true? Coming away from yet another of these gangster histories—and an unusually striking one—I cannot help asking. It all appears true enough; nothing half as convincing about the more sugared slices of American life flits our way at the moment. The idiom, the kick, the kink—there's no refusing them. Art and excitement, and a certain correspondence of film with film have persuaded us time and again. Yet the query pops back, as though here with a harsh clanging finality the screen had interposed its barrier. It may be Life; it may be the iron curtain. We should like more facts; and these, with a devilish ingenuity, the films themselves seem to present.

In this closed circle of fascination, *The Undercover Man* scents new addresses and explores a monstrous legality that keeps step with murder. The Big Fellow himself we scarcely glimpse: one thug next another at an identity parade, an unrecognisable figure hustled off. His lawyer, his victims, his hired men and trackers enact crime and vengeance, and as usual they take us into back-streets and seem (even the star among them) to come from just those streets. Mr. Glenn Ford gives a well-stressed performance as a T-man. The background unravels along corridors and pavements and up apartment fronts to acquire in the end a frightening depth. What more need I say? The hard efficiency of the director, Joseph H. Lewis, admits of faults as also of triumphant flashes. Now and then the long tracking-down may sag or turn aside a little; but against this there are the passages of—what else can one call it?—"pure cinema." Life-and-death pursuit down a crowded side-walk with fruit-barrows and children; prolonged consideration of a rifled bedroom

cut short by the most unlooked-for blow on a screen ever landed; an ominous twilight, with trains crossing behind, shadowy heads in front and the white breast-pocket handkerchief of the probable victim . . . These, since *The Undercover Man* is a film of violence, happen to be violent moments; but they are, to a true eye, no less seizing than the tranquillities of *Louisiana Story*. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

## TELEVISION NOTES

THE most impressive dominion of Television, so far, is Outside Broadcasting, and this summer has been distinguished by many brilliant transmissions, especially those from Lords and the Oval. Last Saturday, for example, you could sit comfortably in your own parlour and observe the dramatic fluctuations of the Middlesex–Surrey match from a closer vantage than that enjoyed by any member of the M.C.C. Instead of watching Compton's spin through trembling binoculars, you had it magnified under your very nose by the telephoto lens, and instead of fighting your way to a bar at the interval you had only to step into your kitchen to get a bottle of beer from the refrigerator. The advantages of watching sport on the screen contrast so sharply with the cost and discomfort of sitting in the crowd that stay-at-home fans are likely to multiply by the million as Television extends its range. In due course the crowds at Lords and the Oval will be studio deadheads, mugs who accept with avidity a free pass from the B.B.C. in order to provide the backcloth and acoustics for broadcasting. The emotional intensity of the contest, I suppose, must be greater in the arena than in the parlour, yet if I had been sitting on the Mound Stand I doubt if my voltage of excitement could have exceeded the sensation of witnessing from my armchair the spectacular dismissal of Edrich or the miraculous survival of Sims. The vigilant cameras, moreover, pick up and bring home a miscellany of minor incidents which contribute to the total effect of the occasion—the mannerisms of a player, the chagrin on the face of a defeated batsman, the odd shot of a fat man in the crowd or the flag fluttering on the pavilion. This has been a great summer for Outside Broadcasting, not only in cricket but in such sports, too, as tennis, swimming, motor cycling and sailing. It has been no mere technical triumph either, for behind the camera tactics there has been abundant evidence of a well-planned strategy of visual broadcasting.

Another department of Television which merits praise for its recent record is Drama. There is less flirting with film techniques than there used to be, a livelier search for the idioms most amenable to television; less ambitious settings, fewer characters, more close-ups, deeper intimacy. Jan de Hartog's "Death of a Rat" was an excellent choice, compactly produced by George More O'Ferrall and finely acted (especially by Rene Ray and Wilfred Walter).

More dubious was "The Passionate Pilgrim," a play about the nurse who got across Florence Nightingale. There were too many scenes and too many characters (fifty or more) to be accommodated without confusion on the miniature screen. On the other hand this unwieldy play gave us a memorable exhibition of acting by Maureen Pryor as the dissident nurse. I get the impression from many recent productions that Television may help to arrest the decadence of acting in this country. The camera is ruthless in its exposure of those facial forgeries of emotion which get by in the auditorium; the proximity of the actor to his audience imposes upon him a severe discipline of integrity in all he does with a smile or an eyebrow.

I hope that Alexandra Palace will go easy on televising stage-plays from a theatre. "Two Dozen Red Roses" (from the Intimate Theatre, Palmers Green) was pleasant to watch, in parts, but it was a photographic transcription, a carbon copy, and not a piece of genuine television.

W. E. WILLIAMS

# Correspondence

## AS A CANADIAN SEES IT

SIR,—I have been asked what I find Great Britain like after a 12-year absence. Before we landed at all, on the ship coming over, we were told that England was groggy, and just waiting to take the count in the next round. We heard most gruesome tales of unscrupulous dentists and careless doctors. As for the labouring classes, they were a bunch of lazy hounds, sabotaging the work of the nation, while they bet shillings—shillings mind you—not pennies—on the football pools and the dogs and the horses. The funny thing was that all this horrific story of inner decay and pending collapse was never attributed to moral weaknesses inherent in the British character as such and now coming out. Rather, the ruin was all wrought by something outside—an iniquitous piece of iniquity called the Labour Government.

I am a Canadian, and a Canadian proud of his Statute of Westminster; but proud also of his British tradition and connection. What am I to conclude after three fascinating months over here—not living in posh hotels on a fat expense account, meeting the right people and rarely out of London, but living and moving instead here and there over the countryside—in towns, in villages, in country places—in the black centre of England and on her sea-silvered edges?

This is the picture as I see it. The Press of our Continent has, on the whole—there are exceptions—been busy writing you off—is even busier just now. Conditioned by that Press, the Canadian comes over here almost expecting to see you rubbing fire sticks together and dressed in woad. And it isn't only a transatlantic press, motivated sometimes perhaps by a partisan economic ideology, that does you in. It's often, as well, your own runaway Britons who have come out among us to tell their story; sometimes, be it said, more in sorrow than in anger. Further, it's you yourselves who do yourselves in. After a speech the other week by a man who, in his greatness, served not only Britain but humanity, and yet whose speech was grist for the transatlantic propaganda mills, I looked up the post-war production statistics for Europe. It is an understatement to say that this speech bewildered me. The figures of your production statistics seem to make you lead almost all Europe in post-war recovery despite your relatively higher war costs.

When I talk to the right people—the groomed, salaried positioned people, the nice people like myself, in hotel rotundas, and at good dinner tables, I am persuaded that Britain is on the wrong road, and that almost everything that can be wrong with a country is wrong with Britain just now. Regimentation, mechanised arbitrarily by the incompetent, authority vested in the self-indulgent and the ignorant, the masses of the workers parasites, all absorptive gut and no backbone . . .

Now, I have two comments.

1. The first is that this business of how some people talk in Clubs and drawing rooms and what "the people" do when they vote with a ballot in a free election is a strange and frightening—or reassuring—business. I was in the United States during one of Roosevelt's elections. Everywhere Roosevelt was decried. Intelligent people suddenly lowered their voices and told us intimate dreadful things about him. With considered unanimity, the Press was against Roosevelt. But the people once again rolled Roosevelt in as the symbol of something they wanted kept alive among them. Is there a parallel here to something that may be happening among you?

2. My next comment is very simple; merely this: that when one is wanting to make a conclusion based, as it were, on rational thinking, it's exasperating to realise how insistent visual observation can be! My point is this: we have *seen* Britain. There may be many reasons for the difference between 1937 and now. But the difference exists. That difference is in the stride and appearance of people on the streets, of men coming out of mines; it is in the faces and bodies of babies and children; it is in the vitality of young people. When I half wonder if I am imagining all this I turn to one incident and know it is not imagination.

Twelve years ago, as tourists, by accident, we stumbled on the Iron Square in Edinburgh. It was horrible. We had seen things like it in Chester, in London, but here we felt was the trapped essence of the misery and degradation of the old world expressed in the tolerated deprivation of its poor. In Iron Square on that day washing was strung across in the corners between windows. It wasn't really washing. It wasn't really garments—pitiful fragments of garments and all of a filthy grey. The mothers were shuffling and slatternly; the children pallid and diseased. On the forehead and face of one child was a running sore; all were unkempt and dirty with the dirt of accepted misery.

Last month in Edinburgh we went down to the Iron Square again. Providence had set the drama for us. The Square was still there, the central paved space, the solid stone and windowed walls . . . the washing was there, too. But, so help me, it was *washing*. The pieces were whole garments and they were white. The children were there. They were handsome, gay, sturdy and clean. They were happy. There was a supervisor in charge and there were toys and picture books and bottles of milk.

Now, for good or ill, that's the revolution that has occurred all over your islands. The thing has happened. You have liquidated at least the most miserable poverty of your poor. An A.A. man, one day in one corner of England, when the talk had turned to the good feeding in Dublin and Brussels for those who could pay for it, stood it no longer and cried out, "Ah, but don't you know it, don't you know it, man; nobody today starves in England!"

Whatever you do about changing or not changing your political custodians, I believe you are going to continue on the right road for Britain.

ARTHUR L. PHELPS

## VATICAN AND KREMLIN

SIR,—Mr. Ivor Montagu paints the Communist Party as the guardian of the "ancient standards" of both Liberals and Socialists and, in contrast, lavishes scorn on "Socialists" who "find it in their hearts" to betray those principles.

For example, they "denounce strikes." Railwaymen in the Soviet Zone of Berlin will understand. They "deny self-determination." Marshal Tito could tell us something about this. They "excommunicate" Zilli—in contrast to the well-known toleration of the C.P. towards those of its members who deviate from the line. Just at present the German C.P. is staging a further spectacle of Communist devotion to ancient standards by openly inviting the collaboration of ex-Nazis in a "National Front" against "American Imperialism."

There are few of us who can truthfully claim that we have never deviated from the ancient standards, but Mr. Montagu and his friends lack any qualification to cast the first stone at us. J. STEWART COOK

Windsor.

## ATOMIC POLICY AND WAR

SIR,—You deserve gratitude for opening your columns to this subject. If Britain is to be used as a base we certainly ought to have some say in what is to be done, and it is time somebody was thinking about it.

I do not know what Dr. Alex Comfort's reasons may be for objecting to the indiscriminate massacre of other people. My own reason is that it is manifestly against the Natural Law; in other words, against right reason in morals, in other words, against God's Will as manifested in the human conscience when rightly informed.

But indiscriminate massacre is not an absolutely necessary accompaniment to the use of atom bombs. If we are clear-headed and humane it will be possible (given circumstances as they are at present) to think out limits and restraints that would enable this weapon to be used without civilian massacre. One obvious way would be to give full notice about the target, or targets, beforehand.

If atom-bombing *must* involve indiscriminate massacre, then it *must* be wrong, and we had better all turn pacifist. Because the only justification for war is that it is fought to uphold the Natural Law, and this disappears if the Natural Law itself is thrown aside by its defenders.

But may we hope that you will keep the pacifists out of this particular discussion, as it does not really concern them. My point is that men, after all, have reason and free will, and ought to use them even in war and even in modern war.

Catholic Church, F. H. DRINKWATER
Lower Gornal, Dudley.

## GREECE

SIR,—Reports of the intense fighting in the Greek civil war and of the proceedings at Strasbourg appear in ironical juxtaposition in the national Press. While former allies are encouraged by the Western Powers to fight among themselves by supplies of arms and dive-bombers, Mr. Churchill suggests that Germany should be invited into the European Federation.

Greek democrats bitterly recall that, while the Germans were in occupation of their country, half a million Greek citizens died of starvation. The survivors were promised by Mr. Churchill and others, as a reward for their sufferings and valour, a model democracy.

The fulfilment of this pledge has emerged as a neo-Fascist regime, implemented with the customary courts martial and concentration camps and having the effrontery to send a representative to Strasbourg presumably to welcome Germany and to assist in conferring human rights on all but Greeks. Contrasted with these anomalies mediation appears as humane, logical and consistent.

Bishopsgate. E. H. ATHANASSOGLOU

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SIR,—I see that you have once again seen fit to repeat the old chestnut about the alleged dismissal of a Greek gendarmerie captain on the grounds of his joining the resistance forces during the occupation. If you look up your issue of January 15th last you will find the facts of the case set out in a letter I sent you on this subject.

It is quite untrue to say that Venetsanopoulos was discharged on the grounds you give, and I invite you or anybody else to substantiate this cock-and-bull story. I have the full text of the charge-sheet and of the Decree of Dismissal of Captain Venetsanopoulos, and I need hardly say there is nothing like that in it. There could not be. No one could seriously believe that a person could be punished for an action commended at the time by his legal government.

Dept. of Information,
Greek Government, A. A. PALLIS
34 Hyde Park Square, W.2.

## ELECTED SILENCE

SIR,—In his letter to you, Mr. Waugh, provides us with a superbly characteristic exposure of the kind of absurdity into which the Roman Catholic mind habitually flounders and becomes waterlogged. Not only is his method of criticism utterly false, being full of that peculiarly perverted reasoning for which Roman Catholics are famous, but his conclusions ride on square wheels.

His "method" is to give us a somewhat cynical and distorted analysis of Mr. Pritchett's review of *Elected Silence*—cynical because it implies that Mr. Pritchett, faced with the necessity of producing a certain number of words, and unable, being a Protestant, to apply the correct terms of reference because they lie beyond his comprehension, extricated himself from the dilemma by resorting to the old trick of measuring with a yardstick what can be legitimately measured only in centimetres. In other words, while Mr. Waugh would have us ascribe Mr. Merton's conversion to Divine Grace, Mr. Pritchett prefers to lay the emphasis on its psychological (that is to say its natural, non-miraculous) causes. It is repellent to Mr. Waugh that this exemplary conversion, which of course in the official Roman Catholic view is nothing less than the result of Divine intervention ("recurrent hints given him by God"), should be stripped of much of its religious glamour and reduced to a rather common-place psychological phenomenon. The fact that the psychological landscape of Mr. Merton's youth is full of just those readily recognisable features which were bound to lead to some form of spiritual upheaval, is quite irrelevant in Mr. Waugh's view. The Roman Catholic must maintain that where Divine intervention is the motive power behind a major crisis in personality, the natural laws of psychological evolution cease to obtain. It is therefore a pity, from the point of view of Roman Catholic propaganda, that the full extent of Divine intervention in Mr. Merton's case is, to say the least, blurred by the prominence of these characteristic formative features. In this respect Mr. Merton is no exception. In every known case where such intervention is claimed, we find that there were natural conditions which were sufficiently conducive *by themselves* towards some Great Change. A single exception to the rule would have been enough to prove the Roman Catholic premiss, but curiously enough no such exception can be found. Surely it would be blasphemous, in the eyes of Rome, to maintain that God could not, if He so desired, irrefutably reveal His power to intervene. One universal revelation would be enough. It would seem that He does not, in fact, so desire.

Mr. Waugh says that the genuine Protestant "would say that . . . the sacramental system and the discipline which Merton has accepted are an imposture." Mr. Pritchett did not say that they were an imposture, therefore he is presumably not a genuine Protestant—whatever that may mean. There is a certain perversity in Mr. Waugh's acrobatics. A Protestant would not accept them as an imposture unless he happened to be just one of those bigoted Protestants whose follies the Roman Catholics find so deliciously easy to expose. Unfortunately for Mr. Waugh there are many Protestants and protestants who are not bigoted and who therefore do not look upon the sacramental system etc. as a fraud, but merely as essentially irrelevant to Christianity; who explain it as an appendage to the Christian life, made necessary by a primitive need in Man for ceremony and ritual, and answering to his natural tendency to escape into the sphere of mysticism and miracle. In other words he does not accuse (it is not very Christian to accuse, nor very enlightened), he deplores—deplores the deflection of religious vitality *away* from everyday life, where it is most needed, *towards* a crude ritualism: crude because for the enlightened Christian, Christ's reality transcends the reality of flesh and blood, on which such primitive emphasis is laid in Roman Catholic ritual.

Personally I believe that it would have been almost a miracle, under the circumstances, if Mr. Merton had *not* become converted to the Roman Catholic Church. As for the title of his book, *Elected Silence*, surely silence and publication are scarcely compatible!

4 Godfrey Street, S.W.3. R. VAN EYCK

## ART CRITICISM

SIR,—Nobody who regularly reads Mr. Heron's art criticism and visits the exhibitions which he discusses could fail to appreciate its courage, invariable sincerity and, sometimes, real helpfulness. When he tells us, though, as he did recently, that he believes the critic should try to purify his writing of verbal felicities, I really must break a lance with him.

I am one of those perhaps old-fashioned people who obstinately cling to the idea that the main justification of most (I will admit, not of all) works of art is to delight; and if criticism is an art, as it surely is, I fail to see why we should not also look to critical writing to communicate pleasure as well as instruction. And, in fact, the best critical writing has always done so. When a Berenson, stressing the paganism of Mantegna's "Agony in the Garden" in the National Gallery, writes of "a rock-born giant kneeling in sight of Rome, in the midst of a world of flint, praying to several momentarily saddened cupids," when a Roger Fry, analysing the landscapes of Claude, observes that "his peasants exist to give us the illusion of pastoral life, not to toil for a living," when a Herbert Read sees the East window at Gloucester "gleaming like crystals of snow rather than flames of fire," we are in each case conscious of, and assuredly grateful for, the quality of the verbal imagery. But so far from "deflecting attention from the work under discussion by attracting it to itself" (as Mr. Heron would have it), the critics quoted all illuminate in phrases which seem to me memorable. I would venture even to say that some of the writings of Ruskin are really only readable to-day because of their flashes of fine writing, those verbal felicities which Mr. Heron regards so suspiciously as self-indulgence.

No, Sir, away with this puritanism in the realm of words! Here at least we have no need for austerity. Let us have the vivid phrase, the poetic image, and enjoy it. Nor am I by any means convinced that the cause of good criticism would suffer.

ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR
London, S.W.7.

## ART IN MEDIAEVAL FRANCE

SIR,—May I be permitted to reply to Mr. David Carritt's review of my book on *Art in Mediaeval France*? His views on it are his own, and I would not presume to criticise them, but on one or two points of accuracy I may be allowed to express an opinion.

I deliberately omitted Melchior Broederlam from consideration, since his most important work was not done in France and he was not of French extraction or training. It would be extremely interesting to learn more of the evidence which makes the National Gallery "Trinity" *certainly* Austrian and the Deutsches Museum retable *certainly* German; there is little certainty in the attribution of most medieval pictures outside Italy and Flanders.

The angel wind-vane comes not, as Mr. Carritt supposes, from the Hôtel Jacques Coeur but from the Château du Lude, and is so described in the plate.

Saint-Germain-des-Près was never Cluinac, and very little remains of its original construction; can Mr. Carritt mean Saint-Martin-des-Champs? That indeed is a church worth visiting, though now desecrated. JOAN EVANS
Thousand Acres, Wotton-under-Edge.

## TOM WINTRINGHAM

SIR,—There will be a large number of people who regret the untimely death of this very able, versatile and generous-hearted man. Though much has been made of his Communist Party activities he was always one of those who had a firm belief in the paramount importance of the role of the Labour Party in the achievement of Socialism. At the General Election of 1945 he stood as Common Wealth candidate for Aldershot with the backing of the local Labour people, and it was a misfortune that he was not returned as its Member. He was one of the many members of Common Wealth who desired to obtain affiliation to the Labour Party, and when that was seen to be impossible he left Common Wealth with most of its leading members.

One dramatic incident is impressed on my memory. At a meeting of the National Committee of Common Wealth some of its members were criticising not merely the policy of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Party but their members also, accusing them of self-seeking, treason against the working class, etc. Tom, who was never backward at criticising policy, boiled over at this, and jumping to his feet he asked, "How many of you have been to prison for your convictions?" There was a deathly silence. Tom went on, "I have! and so have many of the Labour Members!" The course of the discussion was changed by this intervention, though it turned out afterwards that Tom was not the only member of the National Committee who had been to prison, another having suffered as a C.O. HARRY BARHAM
21a High Street, S.W.19.

## SCHIZOPHRENIA OR DUAL PERSONALITY

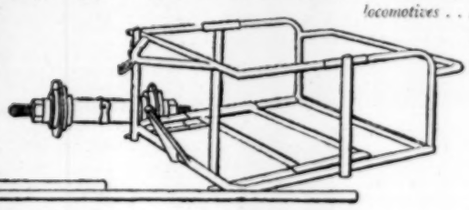
SIR,—I wish to protest against the false metaphorical use of the term "schizophrenia" in your political and literary articles as equivalent to "dual personality." The notion of splitting in schizophrenia is that of fragmentation or disintegration into bits and pieces. This has no relation to the dual, contradictory personalities which, for example, you ascribe to the *Economist* (your issue of 6.8.49). Dual personality is a rare hysterical phenomenon; few psychiatrists or abnormal-psychologists see more than a handful of cases in a life-time of work. Schizophrenia is all too common. Your usage disorganises technical terminology and does not enrich the English language. Cannot the false metaphor (which is not of course confined to the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION) be stopped before it gains wider currency?

PSYCHOLOGIST

## *The fable of the lady and the frog*

A certain Romantic Maiden, who was reckoned extremely beautiful in a rather old-fashioned way, once found a large Frog in her path, and dropped it a curtsey. "What's that in aid of?" asked the Frog. "Aren't you a prince in disguise?" she enquired, nettled. "No, Ma'am," said he, "I'm a Frog—in a hurry." And he hopped away, muttering under his breath.

*Even in this age of hard work and few illusions, there are people who hope for a magical solution to their problems. TI, for their part, are planning increased production — of intricate precision tubes . . . of special paints and finishes . . . electrical appliances, fittings, cables . . . bicycles and bicycle components . . . traffic signs . . . fabricated aluminium alloys . . . parts of motor-cars, aircraft, locomotives . . . everything in short, that T.I. make and Britain can sell.*



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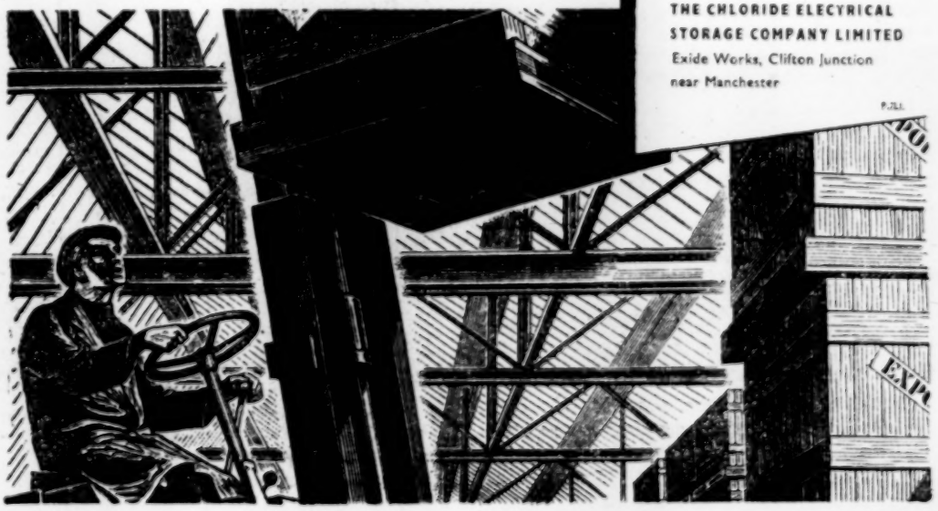

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# BOOKS IN GENERAL

"... an old man, disgraced, shattered, alone, on Highgate Hill, stuffing a dead fowl with snow": so, in a memorable sentence and with his special love of giving to horror the grimace of the bizarre, Lytton Strachey described the end of Francis Bacon in *Elizabeth and Essex*. The information came from Aubrey's *Brief Lives** and if we turn up the original (as Aubrey's new editor, Mr. Anthony Powell suggests), we shall see how Strachey telescoped his materjal for sharper dramatic effect. We shall see the distance travelled between "the first biographer," stuck among his rudiments, and our contemporary who sophisticated the art.

> Mr. Hobbs told me (Aubrey says) that the cause of his lordship's death was trying an experiment: viz, as he was taking the aire in a coach with Dr. Witherborne (A Scotchman, Physitian to the King) towards High-gate, snow lay on the ground, and it came into my lord's thoughts, why flesh might not be preserved in snow, as in salt. They were resolved they would try the experiment presently. They alighted out of the coach, and went into a poore woman's house at the bottom of Highgate Hill, and bought a hen, and made a woman exenterate it, and then stuffe the bodie with snow, and my lord did help to doe it himselfe. The snow so chilled him, that he immediately fell so extremely ill, that he could not return to his lodgings (I suppose then at Graye's Inn) but went to the Earl of Arundell's house at High-gate, where they put him into a good bed warmed with a panne, but it was a damp bed that had not been layn-in about a yeare before, which gave him such a cold that in two or three dayes, as I remember he told me, he dyed of suffocation.

Alone, on Highgate Hill! So rich, so irresistibly usable, Aubrey has sometimes been the victim of the art he created, as Mr. Powell, his excellent biographer, says. For the prospecting scholar each of the *Brief Lives* is a dip of the pan into the gold-bearing alluvia of history; and for the general reader the most drugging of desultory pleasures. One goes back into history, as into some empty mansion; presently there is the sound of a human sigh, a ruminative cough, the creak of a bed, a fall of coal from a fire: the place is inhabited and alive. Was Aubrey the first biographer? Has he a claim to a place beside Boswell? This is a sudden elevation for the "maggotie-headed" antiquarian, the "credulous" Aubrey who catalogued the superstitions of a century; but the more one reflects upon it, the truer and more extraordinary Mr. Powell's statement seems. The temperament of Aubrey might very well be that of an "onlie begetter"; mole-like and yet ecstatic in the privacy of obsession:

> The searching after Antiquities is a wearisome task. I wish I had gone through all the Church monuments. The records at London I can search gratis. Though of all studies I take the least delight in this, yet methinks I am carried on with a kind of divine oestrum; for nobody els hereabouts hardly cares for it, but rather makes a scorn of it. But methinkes it shewes a kind of gratitude to revise the memories and memorialls of the pious and charitable Benefactors since gone.

But how extraordinary is the reflection that until the 17th century there is no English biography. In our civilisation, hundreds of years go by before a new art, a new form of writing appears! For centuries, no one notices, what now seems platitudinous to us, that a man or a woman's life has a unique meaning, and within its own terms; that time itself considerately places a reputable clothing to our lives though we be time's drabs; that commemoration can be an art, without the factitious aid of poetry, drama or fancy. That there is no such thing as the anonymous. Biography appears as an unheroic protest on the part of life against what the artists habitually do with life, a stolid disclaimer. Why (if Mr. Powell's claim is as true as it seems to a disorganised reader like myself), does the impulse boil up in Aubrey?

A glance at the history of English literature beyond what is chiefly imaginative, shows a wilderness of sermons, moralisings, treatises, pamphlets and the very animated documents of discovery and travel; the soul is recorded and even the body, but not the particular life. If there was an acknowledgment of this life, it must have been absorbed by the powerful octopus of classical culture; the life of a Greek or a Roman was edifying, the life of an Englishman unpresentable. A Wolsey was great, but no man was so great as to transcend the chronicle, to outbid patriotic propaganda, or to underbid it with the modest distraction of a *hic jacet*. A man was either large enough for history or for art, and in those alone he could go on living. Is Aubrey (one of the earliest members of the Royal Society) really the expression of a revolution, an example of the early impact of the scientific spirit, at a moment when the touch of science was seminal and anecdote was, suddenly, seen to be the new, semi-divine thing, fact? Was it beginning to be seen that what could be done for strange lands could be done for men? That is one side of his impulse; the other seems to owe something, perhaps, to the curious respect for death, the effort to domesticate and civilise the horror, that is apparent in the 17th century. It is the impulse that has given us the flowing and anecdotal epitaph, devout and yet, by a twist of the chisel, given idiosyncracy; as if the eye of the sculptured effigy winked. The bust has become animated and in that wink there is a revolution. And that brings us to the ideal moment for the birth of a new thing: the end of an age. It is the usual paradox, so often forgotten, that at the end of an age the artists make something new by looking back. It may have seemed to Aubrey that before memory vanished in those troubled years of the Civil War, what had gone by must be, quite simply, catalogued in gratitude, before it was too late.

But generalisations of this kind are foggy and leave out the vivid accident of his temperament and, above all, the luck of his manner. Without that, there is no Aubrey. The odd thing is that the manner is scientific yet imaged, a shorthand, short-breathed and imaginative at once:

> I got not strength till I was eleven or twelve years old; but had sicknesse of vomiting (the belly-ake: paine in the side) for twelve houres every fortnight for several years, then about monethly, then quarterly, and at last once in half a yeare. About twelve it ceased.
>
> When a boy bred at E... an eremetical solitude...
>
> My fancy lay most to geometrie. If ever I had been good for anything, 'twould have been a painter, I could fancy a thing so strongly and had so cleare an idaea of it....
>
> When a boy, he did love to converse with old men, as living histories. He cared not for play, but on play-days he gave himself to drawing and painting. At 9 a pourtraiter.

And it strikes us before long as we read him that it is the painter's inconsequent jump to the concrete detail which makes him readable: that Thomas Allen, the astrologer, would meet "the spirits comeing up his stairs like bees," that William Harvey loved to think in the dark and went down caves to meditate, are a child's quick hearing of the fixing oddity. Aubrey sits there till the old men complete themselves.

Another attraction of Aubrey is one which he may have owed both to the rise of picaresque literature and to his own taste for drawing: I mean his novel introduction of physical description. The eyes of his characters are often mentioned; and he hits off a physical appearance at once. Of John Birkenhead, a knight of Cheshire:

> At the Restauration of his majestie he was made Master of the Facultees, and afterwards one of the Masters of Requests. He was exceedingly confident, witty, not very grateful to his benefactors, would lye damnably. He was of middling stature, great goggli eies, not of a sweet aspect.

Of Prynne:

> Stigmatised in the pillories (his ears were not quite cut off, only the upper part, his tippes were visible...

And the portrait continues:

> His manner of studie was thus: he wore a long quilt cap, which came, two or three, at least, inches over his eies, which served him as an umbrella to defend his eies from the light. About every three hours his man was to bring him a roll and a poll of ale to refollicate his wasted spirits. (Godenius professor in Germany, did better; he kept bottles of good Rhenish wine in his studie and when his spirits wasted, drank a good rummer of it) so he studied and dranke and munched some bread; and thus maintained him till night; and then he made a good supper. Now he did well not to dine, which breakes of one's fancy; which will not presently be regained; and 'tis with inventions as a flux—when once it is flowing, it runnes amaine.

Of John Rushworth who lost his memory through drinking brandy: "His landlady wiped his nose like a child." Of Sir Jonas Moore—this is the opening sentence: "Sciatica he cured it by boyling his buttock."

So one might go on to the astonishing physical description of the philosopher Hobbes:

> he tooke colds, being wett in his feet (then no hackney coaches to stand in the streetes) and trod both his shoes aside the same way;

and again the eyes:

> He had two kinds of looks; when he laugh't, was witty, and in a merry humour, one could scarce see his eies round (i.e., his eie-lids). He had middling eies, not very big, not very little... he had a curious sharp sight, as he had a sharpe witt.

These scholars and clergy, soldiers and gentry, saddlers, lawyers, poets, sour or pleasant, hypocritical or "facetious" (in the old sense of elegant and polished) appear in droll relief and warmly in their own right, as they suffer the ups and downs of the civil wars. Slowly, a strong impression of England rises from these animated busts. We catch the witticisms, the protests, the quarrels, the philosophical asides of an often embroiled, often learned, but seldom polished people. It will not be long before Boswell is born to expand the rights and territories of the individual breath; to add the astonishing ego to the crustiness of the neighbour, to move from biography to autobiography.

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## MARXIST PRE-HISTORY

**Studies in Ancient Greek Society: The Prehistoric Aegean.** By GEORGE THOMSON. *Lawrence & Wishart.* 42s.

This long, often difficult and in many ways impressive book is the first of Professor George Thomson's Studies in Ancient Greek Society. In the preface he defines the plan of the series: "The task I have set myself is to reinterpret the legacy of Greece in the light of Marxism." "Bourgeois historians," who are sometimes harshly criticised here, should not allow themselves to be deterred by this announcement from reading a book which is essentially original—improbable in parts, but often, through its author's combination of learning with dynamic self-confidence, reaching new and attractive conclusions. The amount of specifically Marxist interpretation is negligible, unless Marxism has arrogated to itself exclusively all the results of modern anthropological research. The main thesis of the work (familiar to readers of Thomson's *Aeschylus and Athens*, of the first part of which this is professedly an expansion) is that the prehistoric Aegean peoples were originally organised on the rudimentary tribal basis of the bisected horde, which had neither family nor private property and was essentially communist. Survivals of this type of social organisation are still to be found, notably in Australia; but most classical prehistorians, reacting against the first excesses of anthropological conjecture, have denied the applicability of the comparative method to ancient societies and refused to allow that either the indigenous Aegean peoples or the Greek-speaking Indo-European immigrants ever resembled the bisected horde. In particular they shared the distrust of most Western anthropologists for L. H. Morgan's theory that the Indo-European kinship-nomenclature somehow derives from the "classificatory" system, which he held in its simplest form to be typical of a rudimentary exogamy. According to this system all males of one moiety of the horde could mate with all coeval females of the other, being called simply "brothers" and "sisters" respectively; the upper and lower generations being "mothers, fathers" and "sons, daughters," and the grandparents and grandchildren being denoted by a single common term because equally unfitted for food-procuring. Thomson believes that opposition to Morgan is due to more than mere conservatism or religious prejudice: "The family, as well as God, goes hand in hand with private property. Accepting private property as something that 'was in the beginning,' bourgeois thinkers have realised instinctively that Morgan must be resisted all along the line." The fact that one's ancestors may perforce have practised a kind of communism three or four thousand years ago seems supremely irrelevant to one's assessment of contemporary political ideologies; nor do I believe that many classical historians possess that Byzantine sensitivity which could drive them to the "conspiracy of silence" of which the author accuses them.

Nevertheless, Thomson's case for a Thucydidean view of the origins of Greek society ("The Greeks lived once as the barbarians live now") cannot be disregarded. The picture presented in the parts entitled "Kinship," "Matriarchy," and "Communism," is much fuller and more plausible than that of *Aeschylus and Athens;* fresh anthropological and linguistic evidence is marshalled in support of Morgan, and the reconciliation of the Indo-European "descriptive" kinship-nomenclature with the classificatory system is most ingenious. The anthropological results are related to the Aegean peoples by the tracing of significant survivals both in myth and in the structure of tribe and clan in the historical period. One may admire quite unapprehensively the account of the development from clan-settlement to city-state, and of the conditions of primitive land-tenure. There are, of course, some deficiencies: for example, the section on snakes does not establish their totemic origin against a purely chthonian significance, nor are all animals in myth or all social restrictions necessarily totemic—yet the Theban Spartoi are assigned to a dragon totem-clan. Persephone is not convincing as a moon-goddess, and the description of the relationship of Olympian goddesses with Cretan and Anatolian mother-goddesses is not entirely coherent. Part Two, "Matriarchy," is perhaps particularly full of hazardous conjectures, but in general the evidence for the prevalence of matrilineal succession (not always sufficiently distinguished from matriarchy, even by Thomson) among some at least of the pre-Hellenic peoples is fully and convincingly presented.

Part Four deals with the Heroic Age, and continues for the Greek-speaking immigrants the ethnological investigations which were begun in an earlier chapter for the pre-Hellenic inhabitants of the Aegean area. In both cases the author's historical method is open to criticism, depending as it does upon a more or less unrestricted use of genealogies. No such scepticism as that which originally persuaded Myres, the chief modern protagonist of the evidential value of genealogies, that "Pelasgian" was a name given to any pre-Hellenic tribe, has influenced Professor Thomson: the Pelasgoi are followed from "somewhere on the far side of the Black Sea" to Athens and to Etruria; Pelops was a Hittite who never left Asia Minor; Agamemnon, surprisingly, a fiction. The astonishing thing about this erudite but at first sight naive web of conjecture, in which the Etymologicum Magnum is counted almost equal

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in value with Thucydides, and archaeological research largely ignored, is that the conclusions reached often fit each other to a remarkable degree: many of them deserve the most careful consideration. Part Five, "Homer," after a complicated and not wholly persuasive attempt to derive the epic hexameter from primitive choral lyric, gives a sound if not new account of epic dialect and style, culminating in the somewhat anomalous conclusion that although epic poetry is aristocratic, Homer is "a people's poet." The singular is used for convenience, for the Iliad and Odyssey were the product of successive generations of minstrels. According to Thomson, their unity of form and plot is not due to the deliberate efforts either of an exceptionally able compiler or of the official recorders of the text under the Athenian tyrants: "These poems," he writes, "took shape out of a kaleidoscopic background of impromptu variation . . . crystallising gradually as the power of inspiration failed." Equally open to doubt is his acceptance of Herodotus' guess, the tenth century, as the date of the major part of the Iliad; the archaeological and linguistic evidence cited in support of this view is inconclusive and does not preclude the eighth century date currently in vogue. This latter part of the book gives the impression of being less carefully prepared than the rest, and as if to bolster up a flagging confidence the attacks on bourgeois historians thicken; but only rarely is the author really unfair, as in his neglect of the work of the brilliant American Milman Parry in making recordings of modern Slav minstrels—a type of activity which he attributes solely to Soviet scholars.

It is understandable that *The Prehistoric Aegean*, in view of its exceptionally wide field, should lack the immediate coherence which alone could make it digestible by the non-specialist. It is also, naturally, far from exhaustive, although one might justifiably complain that the fields where material is fullest for the Bronze Age—Minoan, Mycenean, Hittite—are dealt with somewhat perfunctorily. It is exactly here that the author's particular abilities might have achieved the most worth-while results. Yet it is churlish to cavil where so much that is good has been given. It remains to express the hope that the second volume of the series, which is to deal with slavery and early science, may (as well, incidentally as being a little cheaper) achieve an equal degree of objectivity; the pitfalls for the propagandist are greater, and it may be felt that many of the author's previously expressed opinions, especially on the origins of science, require his careful reconsideration.

G. S. KIRK

## TWO SYMPOSIA

**Orpheus 2.** Edited by JOHN LEHMANN. *John Lehmann.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

**New Road 5.** Edited by WREY GARDINER. *Grey Walls Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

A castigation from Moscow for the modern humanistic review or symposium is a mark of respectability almost as essential as was once the article on Kafka or Rilke. Hard behind *Horizon* comes *Orpheus* 2 proudly to exhibit the stripes and weals that *Orpheus* 1 got from the whip of Comrade Zenkovitch recently in *Soviet Literature*. Whack! Whack! Whack! The lash descends with the balm of some kingly accolade, and Mr. Lehmann is promoted to the bleeding but still graceful side of Mr. Connolly in his heroic last stand for Western European culture.

No doubt a Russian tanning hardly less severe, no less ennobling, will greet this second volume of *Orpheus*. At first one tends to doubt how the full battery of Soviet dialectical abuse could be turned upon a compilation so admirably, one might almost say, so mousily innocuous. Yet on reflection one can see that the average competence which *Orpheus* maintains may be far more obnoxious to the Soviet way of life than many a work of genius. Mr. William Sansom's story *Time and Place* may not quite come off; but at least it is an expression of those criminal anachronisms—a personality and a poetic eye. Mr. Ronald Crichton's admirable article on that Mytilenian Douanier Rousseau, Theophilos Gabriel Hadjimichael (only the poor man never had a place in the Customs), may not reveal to us a new Theotocopoulos; yet here evidently was a talent with something more than the mere charm of *naivety*. Let us hope that one day soon we may see the numerous examples of Theophiles' beguiling brush out of the Thériade collection in Paris. Yet from the dialectical point of view Theophilos and Mr. Crichton are poor fishes, both of them. Theophilos, verminous, starving, self-tutored, eked out his mere survival until seventeen years after the October revolution. Yet his painting shows no realisation of the class struggle, nor does Mr. Crichton attempt to relate Theophilos' work to the heroic battle against Western imperialism, of which Greece is the scene today.

Comrade Zenkovitch would, I think, be better pleased by the late Denton Welch's evocation of the snobberies of a coquettish slatternly Edwardian *haute bourgeoise*, Evergreen Seaton-Leverett. (What a pity that before he died Mr. Welch did not evoke for us her male equivalent—as he could so competently have done.) Here, for Marxian eyes, is surely exposed the canker which eats out the heart of capitalist society. Comrade Zenkovitch might draw, too, some sardonic pleasure from the glossy fatuities of Monsieur Jacques Lemarchand's review of the French theatre in 1947–8. From the beginning, I don't doubt, he would suspect the crypto-Fascist, and suspicion would become a certainty when he discovered Monsieur Lemarchand's extravagant admiration for Montherlant's *Maître de Santiago*.

What would he make, I wonder, of that whimsical but not exasperating trifle by Supervielle, *The Girl with the Violin Voice*, or the meeting between East and West, with its implica-

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tions anything but political of George Sager's *Night in Ramadan?* Or of the section devoted to poetry or the technics of poetry—the most ambitious part of the symposium. Would he notice, for instance, a waning of Mr. Auden's and Mr. Eliot's influence before the vigorously reviving shade of Blake? Not the Blake of the Prophetic Books, but of the Songs of Experience? Take, for instance, Laurie Lee's *My Many Coated Man:*

> "The rank red fox goes forth at night
> To bite the gosling's downy throat.
> Then digs his grave with panic claws
> To share oblivion with the stoat."

or the late Lilian Bowes-Lyon's *The Stars Go By:*

> "A fox in heaven's trap that gleams
> Bites his leg off in my dreams.
> I shriek for pain as torn I share
> The white hurt of the wounded air."

What would *Soviet Literature*, above all, make of Dr. Edith Sitwell's Olympian article *On My Poetry?* "My first book," she begins, "... was published at my own expense, and was priced at sixpence. It cannot," she adds ominously, "be bought for sixpence now." "The poems in *Facade*," she goes on to explain, "are *abstract* poems—that is, they are patterns in sound; they are, too, in many cases virtuoso exercises in technique of an extreme difficulty; in the same sense as certain studies by Liszt are studies in transcendental technique in music." Still the popular institution, she tells us that some of her images (apparently she has "creaking light" in mind) were regarded as strange when first she used them, "but they now form part of the currency of the language." At the same time she evidently feels an occasional twinge of nostalgia for the good old days of revolt, and of public miscomprehension. Luckily for her, she is still misunderstood sometimes. Of a recent poem she says: "I cannot conceive how anyone could have so misread this poem as not to know that it was about the dropping of the Bomb. . . . However it was misunderstood." Happy, fortunate Dr. Sitwell!

*New Road* 5, on the other hand, ought to get into Comrade Zenkovitch's middling graces at least. For here there is a faint coquetry with the class struggle—a supercharged article on Whitman hailing him "as the first to put the modern idea of human equality into literary form"; another that attempts to portray Barea as "a truly working-class writer" instead of the competent bourgeois reporter that he really is. Yet I can at least commend a short story by Robert Payne, *Fishing*, and an article on modern poetry by Stephen Spender.

SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH

## THE PLANNERS

**South Wales Outline Plan.** Prepared for the Ministry of Town and Country Planning by G. T. ALWYN LLOYD and HERBERT JACKSON. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 42*s.*

**South Wales Outline Plan.** Explanatory Memorandum. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 2*d.*

**North-East Coast.** A Survey of Industrial Facilities. Compiled by the Research Staff of the Northern Industrial Group. *Andrew Reid, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.* 45*s.*

Here are two books—the one a survey of current facts and the other an attempt to forecast and to provide for the future—dealing with two of Great Britain's problem regions; and here, attached to one of them, is a comment by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning to show how uncertain a business forecasting is bound to be in a country where all the main factors are not under an omnipotent Government's control. It is true that two years have gone by since this Outline Plan for South Wales was completed, though only now does it reach the general public. But in relation to the planning of a region two years are very short time indeed; and yet, within that twinkling of an eye, some of the main assumptions on which the planners set to work have become inapposite, and the Minister, in his comment, finds grounds for rejecting a high proportion of the proposals about new towns and re-location of population.

The principal reason for this divergence of prospects from what seemed likely two or three years ago is that in the interim the National Coal Board has made a start on its task of re-planning the South Wales coalfields. There have also been important developments in the planning of the steel and tinplate industries, and the prospects of new employment in light industries attracted to the region can now be assessed rather more realistically than they could a few years ago. These three factors taken together have done a good deal to alter the probable shape of things to come; and even now the intentions in respect of coal and steel are not fully enough known to make possible confident predictions about the expansion and construction of opportunities for employment in many places. The general trends are clearer; but that is as much as can be said.

This does not mean that the official planners have worked in vain. A large part of their plan stands good, either because it is unaffected by likely shifts in the expected movement of population or because it remains valid subject to manageable changes in the relative scales of execution. The planners, indeed, did their best to guard against the very thing that has befallen them by planning a large part of their report in terms of an answer to the question "How many people can the South Wales Region accommodate in accordance with sound planning principles, supposing the conditions cause so many to wish to live within its limits?" In other words, they planned for a maximum population which they said they did not expect to be reached in fact. It is, however, not really possible to answer any such question without making fairly definite assumptions about the extent and location of industrial development or, accordingly, without the risk of having one's plans upset if these assumptions go wrong. Planning is not, for this reason, useless; but it needs to be very flexible, and every plan requires to be continually modified in the light of current events. These South Wales planners have produced a useful, as well as an admirably illustrated, volume, most of which stands up well—though I wish some of their graphical charts had been rather easier to read.

*North-East Coast* is a different sort of book—a study of the geography, physical and human, the economic resources, and the man-power, of the areas it covers—Northumberland, Durham, and the North Riding of Yorkshire—designed rather to tell potential industrial migrants to these areas what to expect than to put forward any prophecies about their future or plans for their development. *North-East Coast* is "sales propaganda," presented in a most objective and scholarly form, meant to attract *suitable*—but not unsuitable—firms to settle in the North East by giving them in advance a clear picture of what to expect in the way of available "factors of production." The book has nothing in it about amenities, or about the human side of living in the region it describes. It sticks to cold facts, and therein serves a plain and useful purpose.

The two books come from different kinds of authors. *North-East Coast* is predominantly the work of physical geographers, mineralogists, and industrial experts, brought together under the leadership of a geographer, Professor Daysh, who in other works has been responsible for much useful planning for the Northern Regions. *South Wales Outline Plan* is mainly the work of two architect consultants employed for the purpose by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, in which the architects have usually been on top and the economic and industrial planners have usually been relegated to a secondary role. One cannot help feeling that this tendency, though it may be held to arise inevitably out of the existing division of planning between the Ministry and the Board of Trade, is liable to have unfortunate results in *regional* planning, which is essentially a matter calling for equal team work by experts drawn from different fields. *South Wales Outline Plan* is concerned rather too much with the use of local space, and too little with realistic industrial requirements. The right balance in regional planning, which must take in all the factors, has one feels, not yet quite been found.

G. D. H. COLE

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**The Poor Girl.** By MAX VAN DER MEERSCH. *Pilot Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

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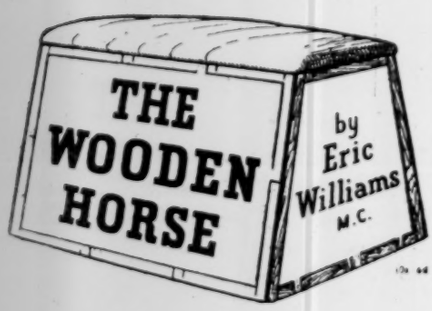


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flows into the gutters beneath their tenement windows. In particular, as Denise herself sees clearly, it is for the women an endless fight to preserve their chastity, the one thing they possess that has some market value. "Yes, she's done everything" her mother cries when Denise is accused of stealing coal to sell for food for her starving family. "She's gone begging, she's stolen things, she's done everything, everything, except go whoring," and the heroine herself adds, "After all, therein lies our greatness—that we girls, daughters of the working-class, sometimes have to save it at such a price!" Denise, then, avoids the fate of Nana, indeed, it would seem that her courage and honesty are rewarded, for she writes her story in easier circumstances, and the author promises us another volume to explain this.

M. Van Der Meersch observes all the circumstances of degradation with a brutal clarity and sets them down simply and directly. It is impossible not to be moved as we are shown the uneven battle—on the one hand the accepted ignorance, the physical squalor, the brutality, on the other, the determination to survive of an ugly, sickly, worn-out young girl, with no stronger instinctive aids than a muddled devotion to a mother who dislikes her and a certain physical distaste for the routine pawings and fumblings of the factory foremen and shop managers. There are moments—for example, when Denise, aged thirteen, rotting with dysentery, is taunted by the other factory hands who dislike her smell with the nickname of "The Corpse"—when, by the author's skill, the story is almost unbearably moving; but, the total effect is remote, chilly, sometimes even repellent. One is inevitably reminded by the Parisian scene—it is an appalling reflection that the slums of the nineteen twenties should apparently have changed so little from those of the eighteen fifties—of *L'Assommoir*, but *Poor Girl* is without any of Zola's force or his macabre but compassionate humour, in particular, it is without any of his great formal sense. Indeed, in its shapelessness, it is more like the work of the American naturalists—Frank Norris, Dreiser or Upton Sinclair—but unfortunately M. Van Der Meersch does not have their violent social indignation, in its place he substitutes certain principles of Christian duty and self-discipline. One can agree with him that Denise's family devotion and physical chastity were her only weapons, but he seems quite unaware of the real tragedy of such an admission. Joyless, arid, physically frigid, Denise, in her victory, is only a realist's version of Little Nell or Little Dorrit, a proletarian Pamela.

*Fontagre* is also the story of a woman's losing fight to save her beloved family from financial ruin. It, too, is laid in France of the nineteen twenties, but this time at the other end of the social scale. M. Orieux, however, is more aware of his heroine's deficiencies and those of the small community which she struggles to preserve. Elia, Marquise de Fontagre, is one of those impulsive, warmhearted, sharp-tongued and turbulent old women, whose tragedy lies in the narrow confines to which circumstances have confined their energies. Born and married into a decaying Gascon family of the *petite noblesse*—a family which is just approaching bankruptcy—her convent education has placed her little above the local peasantry, over whom she rules with feudal familiarity. Her native intelligence and strength of will, however, throw back to some distant warrior ancestor, and these powers she devotes to dragooning the family estate into solvency. Unfortunately she refuses the only offer of help, since it proceeds from the rich commercial Bordeaux family of her despised daughter-in-law, and so, because of her obstinacy and in spite of her will, ruin inevitably engulfs the Fontagres. M. Orieux has most successfully created a personality in Elia, where he might have been content with a type, and he has surrounded her with a number of other figures, less complete and forceful, but no less amusing and individual. The picture of the Marquise attempting to write a letter is one of many excellent comic scenes. By force of character rather than skill she has acquired a local reputation as an orthographer —"When I was at the Lycée," says the narrator, "Elia loved to spot mistakes in my letters, and cried, 'Ah, republican spelling!' She would give a scornful laugh, but no further explanation." The local grand seigneur—the Duc de Lorgefort, with his racial views drawn from Gobineau and his anthropometry—foreshadowing surely the Collaboration—is only one of the many brilliant comic characters. M. Orieux succeeds in the difficult mood of irony mixed with regret and his ear for dialogue is exact. I should, however, have preferred a direct approach rather than the fourteen-year old narrator we are given, but so many modern novelists are unhappy unless some child or other is playing hide and seek through the texture of their work.

My last two books for review are first novels. Both authors, I am sure, have something interesting which they will eventually say, but only Mr. Rhodes really begins to say it yet. His work deals also with the decaying aristocracy—this time a Bavarian Graf of 1938 who lives by taking foreign students as paying guests. The pictures of this pro-Wittelsbach group and of the Mayfair "debs" who flocked to Munich to worship Hitler and the S.S. men, are very cleverly drawn; only by an occasional revelation of the horrors and tortures behind it does the author underline the false security in which these little groups are allowed by the authorities to make jokes about the Führer until events demand their suppression. He has not yet, however, learnt to weld narrative with observation, and the excellent first half of the book is followed by a solid block of involved plot.

Mr. De Mauny is a New Zealander, and through the entangled mesh of his narrative there appear not only vivid scenic descriptions of that country, but also an interesting picture of the intellectual struggles of its intelligentsia when the Spanish War awoke them from their emotional isolation. The whole book is swollen, however, with undigested influences—*actes gratuits* and "camera eyes," and enough childhood observation to inspire a whole batch of first novels—so that we must still wait for Mr. De Mauny's undoubted powers to emerge. Both he and Mr. Rhodes are now, it seems, acquiring the academic literary education the war denied them, and I suspect that this may be just what is needed to strengthen the constructive powers their present work lacks.

ANGUS WILSON

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**A Surgeon's World.** By MAX THOREK. *Hale.* 12s. 6d.

**Armed Pilgrimage.** By J. V. DAVIDSON-HOUSTON. *Hale.* 15s.

**The Flowering Moment.** By WREY GARDINER. *Grey Walls Press.* 7s. 6d.

Dr. Thorek tells so remarkable a success story that his autobiography reads sometimes like a work of fiction. This illusion is fostered by his novelettish prose—"colourful," inflated, smudged with clichés (features are chiselled, feelings pure *and* unadulterated.) In solemn or emotional passages the writing thickens and vibrates on a Wurlitzer note. This is bound to be taxing to readers sensitive to style, but they should go pluckily on, for a very likeable figure emerges from these pages in the end—civilised, clever, cosmopolitan, kind. Dr. Thorek, distinguished in his profession, had from the first that essential requisite for success, he knew what he wanted. His childhood in Hungary was darkened by racial persecution; in America there was poverty; but adversities seemed merely to strengthen his determination and soon he was clear of it all and going up to the higher rungs.

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and some odd sides of it at that, and drama haunts their waiting-rooms. Dr. Thorek is generous with his anecdotes—weird, alarming, tragic, funny, and his account of his work among the poor in Chicago is moving. In his world are many sideshows. He discusses (you would not say profoundly) music, philosophy and God; the necessary deceptions of patients for their own good; euthanasia (arguments against); state medical services (qualified approval for); research into rejuvenation (discouraging); sexual perversity (possibilities of glandular treatment); and much else. Here really is a good book *manqué*. It would have been entirely good if somebody could have cleaned up and wrung out the writing.

The world of Colonel Davidson-Houston seems one of perpetual motion. He travels constantly with battlefields—potential or active—as his destinations. He writes clearly enough in a brisk plain way like somebody making an official report to superiors on military affairs. But his book is exhaustingly long, bewilderingly crowded. People who took part in, or have an expert's interest in the Japanese aggression in China, or the campaigns in the Middle East or Burma will find richness here indeed. Others may well go down before the rush and welter of place names. There is an excellent chapter on Russia—for us this side of the curtain a place of increasing remoteness and mystery, so that any eye-witness's account of it can be as exciting and fascinating as a report washed up in a bottle from some undiscovered country. In 1938 Colonel Davidson-Houston travelled to Moscow on the Trans-Siberian railway and got into cheerful arguments with his fellow passengers about politics, which usually ended with somebody ordering drinks and beginning to sing, "The bells of my familiar *troika* sound across the sparkling snow." He looked out of the window and saw not only the sinister prison vans on trains going eastward but: "One of the most amiable characteristics of this amiable people is their love of animals and birds, and I noticed that nearly every cottage in the villages . . . had a nesting box for starlings."

Mr. Wrey Gardiner's world is poetic and esoteric. An alternative title for his book might be *Le spleen de Londres* or *Mon coeur mis à nu*, for it follows that Baudelaire pattern. In a vague diary form, in a series of vague despondent paragraphs he records his thoughts and feelings:

> The unwanted world of daily woe closes in on me. I am in the grip of a giant insect, the spider-web horror of living in time which is not all flowers and garden parties, poetic evenings and religious leanings. But there is the thin trumpet sound of art in the backward silence of the mind, though people are like cold poultices . . .

Mr. Gardiner makes his contempt for reviewers very plain. This is unnerving. Almost anything one could say would be wrong. Best to refer him simply to Mrs. Crupp: "My advice to you is, to cheer up sir, to keep a good heart and know your own walue. If you was to take to something sir, if you was to take to skittles, now, which is healthy, you might find it divert your mind and do you good." ROBERT GOODYEAR

## A NEGLECTED ARTIST

**The Drawings of Domenichino in the Collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle.** By JOHN POPE-HENNESSY. *Phaidon Press.* 25*s.*

Mr. Pope-Hennessy's peculiar gift is indifference to contemporary taste. While the rest of us are groping our way through the corridors of Victorian mansions in search of Francis Danby, he is quite capable of settling down without misgivings to a monograph on the Chantrey Bequest, or on Court portraiture during the reign of George II, or on those late landscapes of Corot that lend to provincial museums their trade mark of dull decency. We supposed that Domenichino had no urgent message for our eyes or feelings; though virgin, the soil seemed too barren for exploitation by any but the most reckless of speculators. But Mr. Pope-Hennessy sat at a desk in the Library at Windsor for three years with 1,700-odd drawings before him, and compiled this catalogue. It is a model of tight scholarship. Almost nothing of value existed on Domenichino in the critical writings of the present century, and since the Windsor drawings, very few of which are known to literature, represent more than five-sixths of his surviving graphic work, their publication provides the only basis for a study of his paintings. By linking up innumerable drawings with figures in frescoes and altarpieces, Mr. Pope-Hennessy has been able in certain cases to establish the authorship of paintings and to fix a chronology for them; and by tracing the development of an idea from the private scribble to the final composition he has permitted us a glimpse behind the scenes at a curious and rather remarkable man's mind at work.

These drawings vary considerably in quality. Some are laboured, clumsy, and in the derogatory sense academic; others are as spontaneous as Guercino's, or almost as moving as Van Dyck's. Inevitably the hasty record of a gesture, where the artist's chief concern has been to capture the scene witnessed, appeals to us more than the settled lull of the finished product. Domenichino's particular brand of classicism, except in the case of his landscapes which we are willing to see through Poussin's eyes, is antipathetic to us. However, the temptation must be resisted to condemn him for remaining impervious to the revolutionary experiments of the Caravaggesques with their daring use of plebeian types, or to the proto-Baroque painters with their shapes wrapped in flickering light and their figures conceived as elements in groups rather than as isolated, stolid slabs. These, no doubt, constituted the most progressive and formidable forces in Roman and Neapolitan art of the first three decades of the seventeenth century. But it would be foolish to conclude that this is what art ought to have been like during those thirty years, and use our prejudices as a yardstick for all judgments of value; more sensible to consider in which pictorial language the specific talents of an artist can best be employed. Domenichino, the solitary, the neurotic, the quarrelsome, the true heir to the Carracci, felt it his mission in life to put a brake on this dangerous development; and on the success or failure of his enterprise must depend the place we assign him in the history of art. Mr. Denis Mahon in his *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory*, recently published by the Warburg Institute, has demonstrated the futility of dismissing the later work of Guercino simply because he abandoned the, to us, infinitely more attractive style of his youth. Similarly, Mr. Pope-Hennessy enjoins us to judge Domenichino on his own merits, and to appreciate that

> for those who shared his own ideals, and especially for Poussin who venerated him above all living artists, Domenichino represented not the dead hand of reaction, but a system that possessed and could communicate organic life.

Over one hundred excellent reproductions of the drawings at Windsor can only have the effect of presenting the artist in this new, more sympathetic, light. BENEDICT NICOLSON

**The Volunteer Earl.** By MAURICE JAMES CRAIG. *The Cresset Press.* 18*s.*

In a sense James Caulfield, Earl of Charlemont, introduced the eighteenth century to Ireland. He was not, his new biographer insists, a genuis; but he was the most cultured Irish nobleman in an age when culture mattered. He set the pace for the building of Georgian Dublin. He was a pioneer of the Royal Irish Academy. He numbered Walpole and Reynolds and Hume among his friends; he had been the patron of Piranesi. Charlemont's tastes were those of his time—for things classical and Italian and French. Yet for all his continental culture, he was through and through a patriot. Charlemont made Ireland's cause his own, guided Grattan's national

movement in the Irish Parliament and took office as General-in-Chief of the Irish Volunteers. He had the utmost faith in the Irish Constitution. He did not live to see its failure. Grattan once said of Charlemont: "The very rabble grew civilised as it approached his person." Mr. Maurice Craig's biography measures the truth of such compliments. It is a graceful book; scholarly and well composed, and investing its subject with a charm such as Charlemont himself, we are told, possessed. The English reader, who is ignorant of Irish history, will find this book unobtrusively instructive; rarely, if ever, does Mr. Craig address us in the voice of the usher.

## Week-end Competitions

### No. 1,019

**Set by G. de Vavasour**

The usual prizes are offered for apocryphal first words (verbal precocity being assumed) of any three of the following: Columbus, Shakespeare, Blake, Goethe, Napoleon, Byron, Carlyle, Gladstone, Dostoevsky, Whistler, Picasso. Entries by Sept. 6th.

### RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,016

**Set by Naomi Lewis**

Prizes are offered for a 250-word extract (or where appropriate, 16 lines of verse from one of the following works: *Jane Eyre*, by Jane Austen, *Henry Esmond*, by Henry James; *The Importance of Being Earnest*, by Ernest Hemingway; *Portrait of Mr. W. H.*, by W. H. Auden; *The Fortunes of Nigel*, by Nigel Balchin.

**Report by Naomi Lewis**

Plot (Austen), tempo (James), manners (Hemingway), motives (Balchin)—these it seemed, were the danger points. Auden? Hard to say. Verses were goodish: not quite prizewinning. M. Percival's began nicely:

> Lift not the mask of excuse
> Horrify not suburbia
> Hide the secret motive
> Of respectable literature.

One or two Austen-connoisseurs gave Jane to that eligible clergyman Mr. Rivers, he having sensibly abandoned his missionary notions.

Balchins, though lush with neuroses, were few, and were vague about Scott; Hemingways still vaguer about Wilde. But those who had read the Book of the Play had some happy moments:

The plump girl bounced across the saloon and spread herself over a chair at the other girl's table. "I like you," she said. "We get on fine. What's your name?"

"Cecily."

"That's pretty. Mine's Gwendoline."

"That's pretty too."

"I'm glad you like it. My fiancé's name is Ernest. That's a fine name, isn't it? The finest name ever for a man."

"It is a fine name. My fiancé's name is Ernest too."

"What do you know? But I guess there's no name goes along so well with Ernest as Worthing." (G.J.H.)

But the mock-James had the best flavour, particularly in the entries of A. M. Sayers (alas, too long to print), B. Pilkington and Fergie. Prizes: Esmé Kelly receives three guineas for the two entries printed below; and (after some reshuffling) Brian Ireland, Derek Barnard and Thomas Chitty a guinea each. Honourably mentioned, as well as those quoted, are A. L. Robins, R. S. Jaffray, E. S. Somers, E. Appletree, G. J. Blundell, Graeme Wilson, A. M. Sayers, M. Shuffrey, Finn M'Cool, Ensign Beverley.

HENRY ESMOND. By HENRY JAMES

To postulate regret over the intelligence which the letter brought her, involving as it would a negation of long enstrangement between the parties, called for a depth of hypocrisy to which she was incapable of stooping. While he, whose magnificent breadth of generosity remained uncurtailed by the fact of his occasionally, as it were, being nothing but the agent of its expression, was immediately flung into out imaginative transports of refurbishment, a wonderful fervour of acquisition and bestowal that wasn't in the least qualified except by his own wish that the governing circumstances were a yearly event rather than by their very nature unique.

But on this she met him, with a decisiveness so astonishingly unlike her usual unquestioning acceptance of his planning, which was yet so all of a beautiful piece with her whole conduct, as the silent observer of their encounter—whose fate, one might dramatically say, depended upon its outcome—could have taught him, that he positively boggled.

"I want it for Harry. To make possible the University . . ." The glow of her purpose illuminated her, shone out at him with its beaconlight.

For a little he hung fire, clothing objection in no very couth language.

"He'll be back!" she cried, "Beloved by others! Don't you sense it . . .? The rightness?"

On that he took her.

"Yes, it's jolly." he assented, suffused at last in her beam. He marvelled a little. "It's of a splendour—!"

ESMÉ KELLY

JANE EYRE. By JANE AUSTEN

Mr. Edward Rochester was a solitary gentleman of adequate income neither so declined in years nor so deficient in person as to render him anything but the object of lively interest to the ladies of the county in which his estates were placed. His age, which was something above thirty, and his stature which was nothing above the middling, were amply compensated for among the younger ladies by the perfection of his demeanour, which being by turns of a spirited gallantry and a fixed melancholy was naturally declared to be most satisfactorily romantic.

A total want of consistency in the timing of his appearances in the neighbourhood, however, was deplored by both mothers and daughters alike, as placing unreasonably urgent demands upon the pastrycooks and milliners without whose assistance it would be impossible to remedy his most obvious lack—namely, a wife. For it was very properly felt that a certain harshness, not untainted with cynicism, in his character would be corrected by suitable female companionship, his only ascertainable attachment in this connection having been formed outside polite society in the person of a foreign dancer, with whom his intimacy had been of sufficient closeness to justify him in assuming responsibility for the welfare of her neglected child.

It was for the instruction and care of this little girl, now established at his country residence of Thornfield, that Jane Eyre had recently been engaged.

ESMÉ KELLY

HENRY ESMOND. By HENRY JAMES

It came to him there, in the great grey church, that he might, in the look she had seemed to throw him, scarce even raising her head from her book of devotion, have read the bravest of signalled answers to the dim drooping devoted string of flags that fluttered all questioningly from his own poor masthead. What he expectantly stared for a glimpse of across the sea of their long estrangement was simply a hint of an intimation that she too absolutely *saw* and acknowledged and understood.

The music presently ceased, and as they passed out into the crisp pale autumn sunlight young Castlewood broke from his mother's side and, running effusively up, "Ah Harry," he cried, "you didn't then telegraph from Portsmouth?"

Esmond hung fire. It was confusedly present to him that the whole thing was now virtually out between them, that here, in the fond familiar tone of it, he had, after all, the clue his bewildered mind was faintly groping in quest of. His former protectress had laid, meanwhile, a light gloved hand on his arm. "I was always sure," she candidly declared, "that you would come, you know, back."

Our friend turned it over. "What I then don't at all make out," he said, "is why you—"

Lady Castlewood ever so gently took it up. "Why I—?"

"Didn't, on earth, d'you see, before this, put me, as our soldiers phrase it, 'in' the so beautifully composed and comforting 'picture'?"

BRIAN IRELAND

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. By ERNEST HEMINGWAY

It wasn't about anything, something about the right way to eat muffins, and then he had his hands round my throat like he was trying to kill me and I was trying to get hold of the butter-knife to cut him loose. I guess we must have made a lot of noise because pretty soon Lady Bracknell came in with the girls.

"For Chrissake," said Gwendolen. They were pretty high. "Ernest."

"His name isn't Ernest," said Algy. "It's Jack." He looked pretty white.

"Is this true?" said Gwendolen.

"Yes," I said, "It's true. About Jack I mean." Algy said, "And he was found in a handbag at Victoria Station."

"The Brighton line," I said, but I was through and he knew it. Outside the sun was very white on the terrace.

"The line is immaterial," said Lady Bracknell. There was a black mark under one eye where the mascara had run. She was pretty high.

As I went out I passed Gwendolen. She was so close I could smell her.

Outside the sun was very white on the terrace. It had been very cool in there but outside on the terrace it was sunny and very white. DEREK BARNARD

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL. By NIGIL BALCHIN

As soon as he sat up in bed Nigel saw his own reflection. He always did. He had promised himself weeks ago that he would have the thing moved. But he knew now that he never would. After all it was not so bad. From head on it almost looked as if he had a nose, like anyone else. Then of course there were the scars. But they were much the same whichever way you looked at them.

Nelly came in with the rags and herb water. He

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